

StormTrack

WEATHER

FOX 24

abc 16

WEDNESDAY

Morning rain; Afternoon clearing

Low 49 High 57

THURSDAY

Mostly sunny

Low 32 High 61

FRIDAY

Increasing clouds

Low 37 High 65

SATURDAY

Rain likely

Low 47 High 69

SUNDAY

Cloudy, but warm

Low 49 High 71

MONDAY

Still very warm

Low 48 High 71

ALMANAC

Recorded at Middle Georgia Regional Airport
Today's data midnight through 4:00 p.m.

High/Low Monday 59/27
Normal High/Low 58/35
Record High this date 81 in 1952
Record Low this date 12 in 1927

Precipitation Monday
Month to date 0.00"
Year to date 0.77"
Normal month to date 2.10"
Normal year to date 2.10"

SUN & MOON

Sunrise today 7:37 a.m.
Sunset tonight 5:53 p.m.
Moonrise today 1:57 a.m.
Moonset today 12:44 p.m.
Sunrise tomorrow 7:37 a.m.
Sunset tomorrow 5:54 p.m.

New Jan. 23

First Qtr. Jan. 30

Full Feb. 7

Last Qtr. Feb. 14

RIVER STAGES

Today

Change Flood Stg.

Ocmulgee River at:
Macon 6.22 ft. -0.04 ft. 18
Hawkinsville -0.03 ft. 0.00 ft. 20
Abbeville 1.35 ft. -0.16 ft. 12
Lumber City 1.11 ft. 0.00 ft. 15

Flint River at:
Albany 3.79 ft. +1.62 ft. 20
Montezuma 1.69 ft. -0.12 ft. 20

Oconee River at:
Dublin 2.56 ft. +0.02 ft. 21

Ogeechee River at:
Midville 0.97 ft. -0.12 ft. 6

Ohoossee River at:
Reidsville 1.37 ft. -0.01 ft. 11

Satilla River at:
Waycross 4.22 ft. -0.01 ft. 16

Altamaha River at:
Charlotte 3.00 ft. +1.47 ft. 15

LAKE LEVELS

Today

Change

Full Pool

Lake Sinclair 338.76 ft. +0.33 ft. 339.8

Jackson Lake 523.44 ft. -0.03 ft. 530.0

Lake Oconee 434.73 ft. -0.21 ft. 435.0

Javors Lucas Reservoir 368.24 ft. +0.41 ft. 375.0

Levels are reported in feet above sea level

POLLEN FORECAST

Levels are expected to be low-med today with the predominate pollens being cedar/juniper.
Source: pollen.com

AG FORECAST

Mostly cloudy skies will be in place today. Look for a chance of showers, especially in the afternoon hours. The chance of showers will increase this evening and overnight. For tomorrow, expect decreasing clouds.

NATIONAL FORECAST

Forecast weather conditions for 3:00 p.m. today.

Rain

Storms

Snow

Ice

City

Yesterday

Today

Wednesday

City

Yesterday

Today

Wednesday

City

Yesterday

Today

Wednesday

Albuquerque 54/38 49/26/s 53/30/s

Des Moines 45/30 22/10/c 35/14/pc

New York 34/15 49/37/r 41/22/s

Anchorage 3/-11 10/-7/s 12/-7/s

Detroit 43/24 42/19/rs 27/22/pc

Norfolk 48/25 66/47/sh 48/28/pc

Atlanta 56/36 63/38/sh 48/29/s

Fairbanks -22/-33 -20/-45/s -27/-45/s

Oklahoma City 68/52 43/21/s 48/32/s

Baltimore 40/17 53/38/r 41/23/pc

Honolulu 78/72 80/68/r 80/67/s

Orlando 71/44 77/58/pc 77/55/sh

Birmingham 61/48 66/33/ts 47/27/s

Houston 77/65 77/44/ts 60/43/s

Philadelphia 36/17 52/38/r 42/23/s

Boise 31/18 35/25/sn 39/34/r

Indianapolis 50/27 43/19/sh 30/23/pc

Phoenix 64/52 66/42/s 69/44/s

Boston 30/10 47/34/sh 36/13/s

Kansas City 62/45 29/16/s 44/26/pc

Portland 38/31 40/33/sh 47/43/r

Buffalo 40/10 45/22/r 24/20/sn

Las Vegas 58/50 55/40/s 60/43/pc

Raleigh 47/27 66/43/c 49/26/pc

Charleston 58/31 69/53/c 62/33/sh

Los Angeles 56/49 59/44/s 63/49/s

Richmond 45/19 64/41/sh 47/25/pc

Charlotte 49/27 61/43/c 50/26/s

Louisville 52/28 53/24/sh 34/24/pc

St. Louis 68/41 39/19/pc 38/27/pc

Chicago 45/30 33/9/sn 25/19/pc

Memphis 68/54 64/27/ts 41/31/pc

Salt Lake City 48/21 33/22/s 37/32/r

Cincinnati 49/24 52/24/sh 31/22/s

Miami 74/59 77/64/s 78/63/pc

San Diego 57/54 60/46/s 63/43/s

Cleveland 43/20 45/24/sh 25/23/pc

Milwaukee 41/29 29/8/sn 22/15/pc

San Francisco 48/35 51/38/pc 54/46/c

Columbia, SC 57/28 66/48/c 56/28/sh

Minneapolis 32/26 12/0/sn 17/-2/c

Seattle 34/27 39/29/sn 36/31/r

Daytona Beach 69/43 75/56/pc 74/52/sh

Montgomery 65/38 70/39/ts 53/31/s

Tampa 73/47 77/57/pc 77/55/sh

Dallas 71/59 58/27/pc 52/36/s

Nashville 54/42 63/26/ts 38/25/pc

Tucson 58/51 64/39/s 67/40/s

Denver 42/19 38/21/pc 54/37/pc

New Orleans 74/53 74/46/ts 55/41/s

Washington, DC 40/25 55/37/sh 40/24/pc

Georgia Extremes:
High: 71 at Valdosta
Low: 25 at Augusta

Temperatures shown are today's afternoon highs and tonight's overnight lows

REGIONAL FORECAST

Regional Forecast: Cloudy conditions will be spread across most of the state today. Far southern Georgia will be partly sunny. There will be a chance of showers for the northern half of the state.

Dalton 64/33

Rome 66/34

Athens 62/43

Atlanta 63/38

Griffin 64/42

Augusta 66/49

Milledgeville 65/48

LaGrange 64/38

Macon 66/49

Statesboro 69/52

Columbus 68/43

Warner Robins 67/50

Vidalia 69/55

Savannah 69/54

Americus 70/48

Albany 70/48

Brunswick 70/55

Thomasville 70/53

Valdosta 70/55

MANAGER FROM 1B

projects are almost ready to begin. The county already has been taking bids for Fire Station 109, to be built on New Forsyth Road, and has done much of the design work for the Juvenile Court building, to be built near the Department of Family and Children Services building.

Macon officials have begun figuring out a schedule of what projects will be built, and when, using the city's proceeds of SPLOST money. That effort also includes decisions about how much money to borrow through bonds to speed up the process.

County commissioners voted on a focus list only for the first year. Hart said the expects revenues from the SPLOST, which goes into effect in April, will go toward buying land near Robins Air Force Base, early

construction on the Juvenile Court building and the fire station, and design money for the rest of the projects, which will take longer to build. A project manager could also help with some of the design decisions, such as how to build a new animal shelter.

The SPLOST is expected to bring in some \$190 million for Macon and Bibb County over six years. Hart said advocates want to be near the front of the line.

"Nobody has contacted me about a willingness to wait," Hart said. "It's urgent for everybody."

Commissioners are expected to debate the project manager during a committee of the whole meeting, which is tentatively scheduled to begin about 10 a.m. Tuesday. The series of committee meetings is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. in the Bibb County Courthouse.

To contact writer Mike Stucka, call 744-4251.

TAGS FROM 1B

ic Theater, collecting information and connecting families with lost artifacts from more than a half-century ago.

"Basically no one would have cared about this tag, but we think these items have families who want them," said Justin Taylan, a New York man who founded the charity organization behind Pacific Wrecks 18 years ago. "There's been about a dozen we've been able to return, some to the veterans themselves."

Moore's wife, Laurie, went to the website after a family conversation prompted a late-night search for more information on her husband's lost father.

"She got me out of bed at 2 a.m.," Moore said, recalling she had a printed piece of paper that referred to the "mystery of Charlie Moore," and a photo of the long lost dog tag.

"The only reason we have our story is because of the

Internet — modern technology," Laurie Moore said.

After a few unsuccessful attempts to get in touch with Taylan, Moore's son Seth took over the quest and with a little perseverance made a connection in November. Seth Moore successfully negotiated the dog tag's return just in time for Christmas.

Laurie Moore said watching the father and son share the moment when the dog tag was revealed was almost too intimate to bear. More than a few tears were shed, Chuck Moore said.

"It was an overwhelming moment," he said.

Chuck Moore said there is still someone else he would like to share the discovery with, his mother, Myrtle Porter of Columbia.

She's aware the dog tags exists but has mixed emotions about revisiting that time when she became a young widow more than 60 years ago.

"She still hasn't seen it," he said. "We are waiting on her to tell us she's ready."

FURNITURE FROM 1B

room used for staff training has been created from two smaller rooms, and conference tables and chairs were needed for the new spaces, Collier said.

For those who might question the expenditures, Collier said the money was spent to better serve the public.

"When you talk about the boardroom, it is for our citizens so that they can come to board meetings and not have to stand up and not have to stand in the hallway," he said. "Quite frankly, if you talk about the conference room, that's where the superintendent meets with the public."

Asked whether the change in school system leadership had prompted the spending, he said no.

"I think it's more an opportunity to really do what we are in the business of doing, to serve the public better. That's what these changes are," Collier said. "The board of education, the offices in the building, they belong to the people, they belong to the citizens. It's an opportunity to serve those citizens better."

The system began a series of furniture purchases for the central office in March. Most of the pieces were bought between August and November, records show.

The most expensive single purchases came in August, with the system spending close to \$10,000 on a conference table and bases, a lectern and a storage credenza. More than \$4,000 of that total was for the conference table and bases alone.

Later that month, the system bought 28 executive, high-back chairs and 16 guest chairs totaling more than \$11,000. Other purchases during the year ranged from \$709.22 to \$5,639.20 for desks, conference tables, chairs and a sofa.

In December, the system bought four more desks for employees who will help the Bibb school system administer a federal grant aimed at preparing middle school stu-

Furniture purchases in the Bibb County school system's central office, March-November 2011

Invoice Date	Furniture	Cost
March 17	Steelcase upholstered chair	\$709.22
July 21	HON desk and left return	\$893.00
Aug. 2	Minton Jones boat-shaped conference table	\$1,133.00
Aug. 2	OFS conference table, four bases, lectern and storage credenza	\$9,968.61
Aug. 25	28 HON executive high-back chairs, 16 guest chairs	\$11,104.00
Aug. 30	12 HON guest chairs, one rectangular table and base	\$4,398.75
Sept. 2	Minton-Jones tiger mahogany finish conference table	\$1,194.80
Sept. 8	80 Minton-Jones stack chairs	\$5,639.20
Sept. 14	HON right pedestal desk, left return, center drawer for desk	\$1,810.89
Sept. 30	Bassett sofa with arms, two accent chairs	\$3,547.00
Oct. 4	Two HON right pedestal desks and left returns	\$1,786.00
Nov. 8	HON executive desk, conference table with base, two-drawer file	\$2,931.25
Total: \$45,115.72		

Source: Bibb County Board of Education

dents for education beyond high school, as well as for an in-house attorney. Collier did not have figures on the cost of those items.

The school system hasn't purchased new furniture for the superintendent's office since the mid-1980s, one longtime central office worker said.

The district has gotten rid of obsolete furniture, including desks that had been propped up on bricks. In other cases, older but still usable furniture has been moved to other offices.

The furniture and renovations have been paid for out of the system's contingency funds, which total about \$1.4 million, Collier said.

School board members had differences of opinion about the timing and scope of the purchases.

Board President Tommy Barnes said the furniture purchases have accompanied other efforts that will help leaders bring about change in the school system.

"We want to effect change, (and) we didn't have anywhere we could bring people together," he said.

Board member Lynn Farmer, on the other hand, said she prefers a more conservative spending approach whenever possible, especially when it comes to the central office.

Farmer said she remembered strong public outcry

when the school system moved to its current offices at 484 Mulberry St. in the 1990s. Many people criticized school leaders for moving into a new air-conditioned building, for example, when students in some schools didn't have it, she said.

"I've always been sensitive to that. The feeling is people want money spent on children," Farmer said. "If it's something they really need, I understand. If it's something they can get by without, I think we're all in getting-by-without mode — or we should be."

Other school systems

Spot checks of similarly sized school systems around the state showed that spending on furniture for administrative offices in recent years has varied widely.

Spokesmen for the Richmond and Houston county school systems said their districts hadn't made major furniture purchases for their central offices in recent years.

Houston County has bought a desk occasionally for a new employee, said Stephen Thublin, the assistant superintendent for finance and business operations. Also, the central office recently converted an office into a conference room. New furniture for it came in under \$1,500, Thublin said.

Lou Svehla, the Richmond County school system's public information coordinator, said there haven't been any major furniture purchases at their central office in the four years he's worked there. He said the system had made an occasional replacement purchase.

In Muscogee County, the school system made a one-time \$1.5 million purchase of furniture for the system's newly built Public Education Center in 2009. The building itself, which houses administrative offices and the board meeting room, cost around \$20 million.

The building, as well as the furniture, was funded through a 2003 special purpose sales tax.

While The Telegraph received bid documents for most of the furniture purchases in Bibb, required for purchases of \$201 or more, the school system could not find documentation for a \$709 chair.

Collier said the chair was within the range required for a bid solicitation. However, bids apparently were not put out for the chair, according to the school system's attorneys.

Collier said he thinks board policy should be amended to set a higher minimum amount needed for bids. Houston County's bid minimum, by comparison, starts at \$1,000.

UGA seeks another top recruiting class, 1C

SPLOST would fix old WR needs

By CHRISTINA M. WRIGHT
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WARNER ROBINS — Travel time around Warner Robins has greatly improved with funds for road projects through a countywide sales tax, but it's now time to turn focus on other capital needs, the mayor said.

"They've done a good job the last two SPLOSTs to build up our infrastructure," said Warner Robins Mayor Chuck Shaheen. "This SPLOST really affects past, present and future plans for the city of Warner Robins."

Warner Robins' cut of a proposed \$155 million special purpose local option sales tax renewal would be about \$44.4 million. The list of projects primarily addresses buildings and previously underfunded projects.

Houston County voters will cast ballots on the referendum March 6. If passed, the county's sales tax would remain at 7 percent, and the funds

SEE SPLOST, 6A

Water Works Park to get \$6M in upgrades



JASON VORHEES/THE TELEGRAPH

Alan Morgan follows his son Jack, 22 months, down a slide Saturday at Amerson Water Works Park. The park is currently open only on weekends, but officials hope to open it on weekdays by mid-February.

Park might close for a year as improvements to the trail system and overlook, as well as new picnic shelters and parking spaces, are added

By S. HEATHER DUNCAN
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Amerson Water Works Park in Macon is about to receive a face-lift using funds from a congressional earmark that dates back to Jim Marshall's tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Most of the design and engineering work for new trails, roads, restrooms and picnic shelters has been finished, said Mike Ford, CEO of NewTown Macon, a non-profit downtown booster organization that operates the park. Once the Georgia Department of Transportation and other government agencies approve the plans, construction on the \$6 million project could begin by late fall.

But those improvements could mean closing the popular park for about a year.

SEE PARK, 6A

NTSB: Golson's landing gear was retracted

Plane crash investigation reveals Coliseum CEO's wife wasn't in cockpit

By ANDREA CASTILLO
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A Saturday investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board of the plane crash that killed Coliseum Health System Chief Executive Officer P. Allen Golson found the plane's gear handle in the up, or retracted, position.

Pilots usually place the gear down for landing, according to Ralph Hicks, senior air safety investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board, though he

SEE GOLSON, 6A

THE RAIL

YOUR NEWS EXPRESS

Romney would rank among richest presidents ever

Just how rich is Mitt Romney? Add up the wealth of the last eight presidents, from Richard Nixon to Barack Obama. Then double that number. Now you're in Romney territory.

He would be among the richest presidents in American history if elected — probably in the top four. He couldn't top George Washington who, with nearly 60,000 acres and more than 300 slaves, is considered the big daddy of presidential wealth. After that, it gets complicated, depending how you rate Thomas Jefferson's plantation, Herbert Hoover's millions from mining or John F. Kennedy's share of the vast family fortune, as well as the finer points of factors like inflation adjustment.

But it's safe to say the Roosevelts had nothing on Romney, and the Bushes are nowhere close.

The former Massachusetts governor has disclosed only the broad outlines of his wealth, putting it somewhere from \$190 million to \$250 million. That easily could make him 50 times richer than Obama, who falls in the still-impressive-to-most-of-us range of \$2.2 million to \$7.5 million. Of course, an unbelievable boatload of bucks is just one way to think of Romney's net worth. Put alongside America's 400 or so billionaires, Romney wouldn't make a ripple.

— Associated Press

7 Northeast students implicated in rape case

By OBY BROWN
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Seven teenagers at Northeast High School sexually assaulted a 16-year-old special-needs student inside a restroom as the school day wound down Jan. 19.

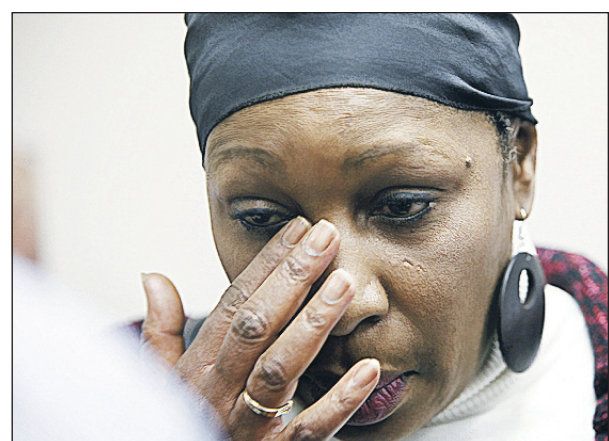
That's the allegation in a Bibb County campus police report that hasn't been released to the public.

Four 17- or 18-year-old students charged with raping the girl were still in the Bibb County jail Saturday. Three other students were taken to the Macon Youth Development Campus, where juvenile offenders are held.

Bibb County school officials released no information about the case until Jan. 24, and The Telegraph filed an Open Records Request for the initial campus police report that day. That report, subject to disclosure under Georgia law, wasn't filed until Friday afternoon,

SEE RAPE, 6A

One of the suspects allegedly got the girl out of her classroom by telling her teacher that another school employee wanted to see the girl.



SHAWN ROCCO/RALEIGH NEWS & OBSERVER

Elaine Riddick, 57, wipes away tears while talking to the media after the Eugenics Compensation Task Force announced a \$50,000 compensation for forced sterilization victims Jan. 10 in Raleigh, N.C. The state's eugenics program lasted from 1929 to 1974.

Sterilized by North Carolina, she felt raped once more

Woman says state sterilized her without her knowledge after she was 14, raped and pregnant

By DAVID ZUCCHINO
Los Angeles Times

RALEIGH, N.C. — Elaine Riddick was a confused and frightened 14-year-old. She was poor and black, the daughter of alcoholic parents in a segregated North Carolina town. And she was pregnant after being raped by a man from her neighborhood.

Riddick's miserable circumstances attracted the attention of social workers, who referred her case to the state's Eugenics Board. In an office building in Raleigh, five men met to consider her fate — among them the state health director and a lawyer from the attorney general's office.

Board members concluded that the girl was "feeble-minded" and doomed to "promiscuity." They recommended sterilization. Riddick's illiterate grandmother, Maggie Woodard, known as "Miss Peaches,"

SEE STERILIZE, 7A

RAPE FROM 1A

Eight days after the episode, according to Randy Howard, the Bibb County school system's in-house attorney.

In a letter to a Telegraph attorney, Howard said school officials would get the police report Monday and "if there are no legal objections or confidentiality issues, we will produce the incident report."

Several people in the school system are familiar with the report, and one person provided details to The Telegraph before its release. Here is what happened at the school Jan. 19, according to the multipage report:

That afternoon, sometime after 1 p.m., one of the male students who knew the 16-year-old went to the girl's classroom and told the teacher that another school employee wanted to see the girl. The teacher let the girl leave class, and she walked down the hallway with the boy.

That student led her to a nearby boys restroom. Two other male students were waiting near the restroom doorway.

Four other students either were already inside the restroom or came in later. School video captured the boy coming

to the girl's classroom, the boy and girl walking down the hallway and the two teens waiting outside the restroom.

Inside the restroom, for the next hour, the seven students raped and sodomized the girl. The students threatened the girl and told her not to tell anyone what had happened.

After the ordeal, the girl got dressed and was taken back to her classroom. By then, the school day had ended and the girl went home.

Later, at home, when the girl's mother was washing clothes, she asked her daughter about the smell of some of her clothing, but she didn't get an answer from her daughter that satisfied her. The girl went back to school Friday. When she got home, her mother asked her again about her clothes and pressed her for an answer. Only then did the girl tell her what had happened.

The mother called Macon police and later took her daughter to the hospital, where medical personnel gathered evidence that could be used in the case. At the hospital, a campus police detective said his department would handle the case because it had happened on school property. Detective Corey Goble is leading the investigation.

Police got arrest warrants

over the weekend of Jan. 21, and some of the students were soon taken into custody. Others were arrested at Northeast after the school week began. Charged as adults are: Antonio Deaundry Jackson, 18; Ashley J. Clark, 17; Jimmie Lee McKnight, 17; and Greg L. Watkins, 17.

Campus police have questioned all of the teenagers in the case. The initial report made no mention of any gang connection. The 16-year-old girl's family has hired Macon attorney Brad Wilson to represent her.

Contacted Saturday, Wilson would say only, "At this point, my only comment is no comment."

In November, the Bibb County school system paid \$67,000 to settle a lawsuit alleging that the district didn't do enough to prevent the sexual assault of a special-needs student at Northeast High in 2008. The victim in that case also was a 16-year-old.

Another student at the school, Ikeia Phillips, attacked her in a school computer lab. He later pleaded guilty to assaulting the teen with intent to rape her and was sentenced to seven years in prison.

To contact writer Oby Brown, call 744-4396.

GOLSON FROM 1A

said investigators will need to have a closer look at the plane to make any determinations.

Golson, 55, died Friday after his Cessna 340 twin-engine plane crashed in a field about half a mile south of the Ocala International Airport in Florida and caught on fire at about 12:30 p.m. Golson was the pilot, and his wife, Carol, 52, was the only other passenger on the six-seat plane. The investigation also found that at the time of the crash Carol Golson was sitting in one of the plane's aft cabin seats, and not in the cockpit with her husband.

The accident happened about an hour and 10 minutes after leaving Macon.

Earlier this month, Golson announced he would be stepping down from his Macon job after seven years to become CEO of Ocala Health System.

Carol Golson is in stable condition at the Ocala Regional Medical Center after sustaining minor injuries in the crash, according to Merita Burney, the Coliseum's chief nursing officer. Carol was expected to be moved to another room Saturday afternoon after spending time in the intensive care unit for observation, Burney said.

The aircraft wreckage has been removed from the crash site, and Hicks expects investigators to be on the

scene in Ocala until Monday or Tuesday. The entire investigation could take six to nine months, though. A preliminary report will also be released in a week, he said.

Investigators also discovered that only two of the aircraft's six fuel tanks had fuel in them at the time of the incident. The other four tanks in the plane were ruptured in the post-crash fire, said Hicks. The NTSB is investigating the crash with the assistance of the Federal Aviation Administration.

"This is strictly a fact-finding phase," Hicks said. "We're documenting the facts right now."

Golson was cleared for a visual approach by a flight tower in Ocala, but contact with Golson's plane ended there. Golson did not make any emergency or distress calls before the crash, Hicks said.

According to paperwork filed with the FAA, Colson recorded over 1,000 hours of flight time over the summer.

Burney, who lives in the same River Forest subdivision as the Golsons in Monroe County, said neighbors have expressed "shock, disbelief and sadness."

"It's a great loss for all of us, the family at the Coliseum and the neighbors at River Forest," Burney said Saturday. "He will be greatly missed."

To contact writer Andrea Castillo, call 744-4331.

PARK FROM 1A

Ford said NewTown's design and engineering firm has recommended shutting the park completely during construction.

"But we haven't agreed to that, and we're the ones that get to make the decision," Ford said. "We think that's a long time to be closed."

NewTown has already heard more complaints than its leaders expected about its decision to close the park on weekdays starting a few weeks ago, he said. It plans to open the park gates only on weekends until spring, although Ford noted that visitors are still allowed to park outside the gates and walk in.

Nim Long, landscape architect for the park improvements, said the project will include a variety of features.

The upstream overlook, where visitors can scramble down a steep bank to a popular rocky curve in the river, will become a focal point. Stone steps will be put in to make hiking easier and to reduce erosion. New picnic shelters, plus an additional parking lot, will be added at this overlook. The new parking area will be recessed and difficult to see from the overlook.

Many existing trails will be paved as part of the project, creating three loops: one shorter path around the "great lawn" above the playground, a loop that roughly follows the river and another that loops a large portion of



Porter Pavilion at Amerson Water Works Park overlooks the Ocmulgee River.

JASON VORHEES/THE TELEGRAPH

the park and would eventually connect to the Ocmulgee Heritage Trail near the creek at the park's southern edge. The trails around the park's large pond will be crushed stone, and a boardwalk will be built to elevate the trail in areas around the pond that often flood, Long said.

The new road system, which will include an entrance roundabout and map to show the park's various trails and activities, will better control where cars can drive in the park, Long said. It will offer a small loop that

doesn't exist now to allow car riders a glimpse of the river overlook. New parking areas will be added, not only at the overlook but at the tent-like riverfront pavilion, for a total of 75 to 80 parking spaces in the park, Long said. The open meadow at the entrance will be planted with some tree clusters and can also be used for event parking.

A new canoe and inner tube takeout will be built at the downstream edge of the park, allowing visitors to float about 1.8 miles from the

existing canoe launch to the takeout, Long said.

Either as part of this set of improvements or in the next phase, mountain biking clubs may be invited to develop trails on the northern end of the park nearer to the existing canoe launch, and a Frisbee golf course could also be added.

Future phases of Water Works development envision a welcome center and a mini-amphitheater, but these aren't funded as part of this project, Long said.

Water Works Park, which is

larger than some state parks, was the location of the old Macon Water Authority water treatment plant before a historic 1994 flood submerged it. Before developing the plan for the park, NewTown held public meetings and invited public feedback about what features people wanted to see there.

Ford said the recent decision to close Water Works Park on weekdays during the winter was a money-saving measure.

NewTown was paying someone \$700 a month to

open and close the park gates daily and the Bibb County Sheriff's Department \$400 weekly to patrol the park periodically. (It is still paying the sheriff's department \$200 for this service on weekends.) A NewTown employee also patrolled the park now and then, although it is not his primary job to be a park ranger, Ford said.

No date has been decided for re-opening the park on weekdays, but "we weren't sure we would get any complaints and we are, so it will be sooner rather than later," perhaps in mid-February.

Park supporters and NewTown officials have voiced a need for a permanent ranger at the park, but Ford said funds still need to be raised for that.

"We think if we've invested \$6 million, we have to have somebody there, preferably 24/7," Ford said.

Ford said he foresees that when the major improvements to the park are complete, it will be open from dawn to dusk daily.

The improvements will be managed by NewTown with oversight by Mayor Robert Reichert, Macon businessman Chris Sheridan and Macon Water Authority Chairman Frank Amerson, for whom the park is named. A 25 percent local match was required, which NewTown is providing by paying for the design and engineering work, Ford said.

To contact writer S. Heather Duncan, call 744-4225.

SPLOST FROM 1A

would be spent on capital projects throughout the county and its three cities.

Recreation department off sidelines

Shaheen said the city has put more of a focus on recreation in the proposed SPLOST than the previous two because the department has been neglected for years.

"Since the '70s, funding for recreation has not kept pace with the growth of the city," said Recreation Director James Dodson.

Warner Robins has earmarked about \$7.8 million for recreation. Perry is the only other government to include funds in that category, with \$900,000 to go to recreation.

At \$5 million, the most costly item on the city's recreation list is the latest version of a project that has been discussed for at least 17 years. The sports complex, currently approved to be built just northwest of the intersection of Russell Parkway and Ga. 247, was originally planned to be mostly softball

fields for tournament play.

Dodson said new plans would wrap it into a recreation complex, which would include walking trails, playgrounds and administrative offices — which are currently on Watson Boulevard next to City Hall. A location for the latest plan for the facility has not been selected, he said.

City Council would need to approve a new location, and councilmen had mixed views about such a discussion last year. Shaheen and Dodson have said the currently-approved location isn't the most favorable, but some councilmen argue the location needs to be used because work already has been done on the site.

Two other new facilities would be built with recreation funds, including \$550,000 for an amphitheater and \$900,000 for Veteran's Park and Vietnam Memorial Park. Neither project has concrete plans, but Shaheen said there is a lot of public interest in the latter.

"A lot of people have said, 'It's about time,'" Shaheen said.

Dodson said the SPLOST funds in recreation also will be spent to renovate existing facilities.

"Even with this SPLOST, it certainly won't address all of the

needs," he said, noting no new facilities have been built in the newer south and west areas of the city.

Public safety: Number one

Though recreation was given more emphasis this year, Shaheen said public safety is "always the highest priority." Public safety projects account for about 23 percent of the city's projects on its proposed list. In total, they would cost about \$10 million.

The Law Enforcement Center would receive about \$4.5 million to complete its construction and furnishings, Shaheen said.

Construction began on the police headquarters building, at Watson Boulevard and North First Street, late last year. It was started with \$5 million budgeted in the 2006 SPLOST. Shaheen said the funds weren't enough for the structure that was needed. According to a fee schedule the Redevelopment Agency approved this month, construction on the new police headquarters will cost a maximum of \$6.98 million, and the architecture fees will cost about \$560,000.

"I don't know how they came

up with five million that last time around," Shaheen said. "This time — we had it down to a set number" from experts.

If the SPLOST passes, Shaheen said the funds would complete the building inside and outside.

"We don't want to go to the (property) taxpayer to finish it," he said, adding possible leftover funds could be used on future expansion of the building or renovating the current police station.

The public safety category also includes \$960,000 for three trucks for the fire department, \$500,000 for upgrades for the fire training facility, \$300,000 for upgrades for the police training facility and \$56,000 for thermal imaging cameras.

Spiffing up the old

Another big item on the city's list is updates for City Hall and the neighboring Civic Center. Renovations and modifications, including new air conditioning, new facades and security features for the buildings, are earmarked for \$4.7 million.

"It's 40 years old," Shaheen said of City Hall. Both buildings were built in 1972. "We just keep patch-

ing problems. This would give us the opportunity to provide a safe work environment for our employees and (one) that's customer friendly."

The SPLOST list also includes \$6.6 million for water and sewer improvements. The majority, nearly \$5.5 million, will be used to pay for a major overhaul of the system, which City Council has been discussing the past few months. The finance department is reviewing borrowing options for the work, which would increase the facility's capacity.

About \$8.1 million would be spent on road improvements. The projects include sidewalks throughout the city, and streetscaping along Russell Parkway and in Commercial Circle.

Shaheen said all of the SPLOST projects would provide better public safety, quality of life and job opportunities in Warner Robins.

"It's critical to continue to move our city forward," Shaheen said. "It helps take the burden off the general fund."

Information from Telegraph archives was used in this report. To contact writer Christina M. Wright, call 256-9685.

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Macon police surprised to learn rape case was theirs

'It's highly unusual' police not initially asked to lead case; interim campus Police Chief Prater suspended



Prater

By AMY LEIGH WOMACK and PHILLIP RAMATI
Telegraph staff

Macon police didn't learn that they were lead investigators in the alleged rape of a 16-year-old Northeast High School student

until the Bibb County school superintendent's news conference Tuesday afternoon.

Superintendent Romain Dallemand had called Deputy Police Chief Mike Carswell on Jan. 30, the day before he acknowledged "gaps" in the system's response to

the case, and asked if the Macon Police Department would review the campus police department's work in the case.

It wasn't clear until the Tuesday afternoon news conference, however, that the school system was actually handing the case over to city investigators, Police Chief Mike Burns said Wednesday.

SEE RAPE, 3A

Hundreds of jobs planned by new owner of Range Fuels

LanzaTech has hired some former Range Fuels workers, and plans to hire more locals

By S. HEATHER DUNCAN
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The new owner of a shuttered ethanol plant in Soperton plans to eventually add hundreds of jobs there to produce ethanol and other chemicals, a company official said this week.

That would boost Treutlen County employment even more than the plant's

former owner, Range Fuels, had promised in exchange for state and federal handouts.

Laurel Harmon, vice president for government relations of LanzaTech Inc., spoke to The Telegraph this week about her company's plans for the plant owned by its Georgia subsidiary, LanzaTech Freedom Pines LLC.

The Soperton refinery was built by Colorado-based Range Fuels with the help of about \$90 million in federal and state grants and loan guarantees. But Range's catalytic technology failed to

SEE JOBS, 3A

Signing Day

Dodge County's Floyd signs with Georgia



BEAU CABELL/THE TELEGRAPH

Leonard Floyd says Georgia's a good fit as he gets congratulated by his mother, Chrishondra Floyd. Floyd had just finished signing papers committing him to the University of Georgia on Wednesday at Dodge County High School in Eastman. The 6-foot-5 defensive lineman and linebacker was sporting a fancy new haircut he got yesterday especially for the occasion.

Full coverage of Signing Day on 1C

GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2012

Merger plan hung up on voting maps

By MAGGIE LEE
mlee@macon.com

ATLANTA — Three weeks after Bibb County's state legislative team planned to end an annual exercise in futility and publish a bipartisan Macon-Bibb County government consolidation plan, legislators are hung up on the voting-district maps of the proposed new government.

The delegation has not disclosed any details of

their problems agreeing on the maps.

In other major consolidations across the state, however, politicians don't make the big decisions.

"It was a citizen-driven thing," says Pat Allen, co-chairman of the 15-member Unification Commission that wrote the charter for the Athens-Clarke County marriage of 1990.

At the time, Allen was

SEE MERGER, 8A

THE RAIL

YOUR NEWS EXPRESS

Treasure hunter says he found sunken boat with \$3B in platinum

A shipwreck hunter says he has found the wreck of a World War II merchant ship that was torpedoed by a German U-boat off Cape Cod with a load of platinum now valued at \$3 billion — perhaps the richest hoard ever discovered at the bottom of the sea.

Greg Brooks of Sub Sea Research, in Gorham, Maine, said a wreck 50 miles offshore is that of the Port Nicholson, a British vessel sunk in 1942. Salvage operations should begin this month or in early March.

Brooks said the Port Nicholson was going from Nova Scotia to New York and carrying 71 tons of platinum when it was torpedoed. The platinum was intended as payment from the Soviet Union to the United States, he said.

— Associated Press

'Soul Train' host Don Cornelius dead of suicide

Don Cornelius, the silken-voiced host of TV's "Soul Train" who helped break down racial barriers and broaden the reach of black culture with funky music, groovy dance steps and cutting-edge style, died early Wednesday of an apparent suicide. He was 75.

Police responding to a report of a shooting found Cornelius at his Mulholland Drive home in Los Angeles around 4 a.m. He was pronounced dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound about an hour later at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, according to the coroner's office.

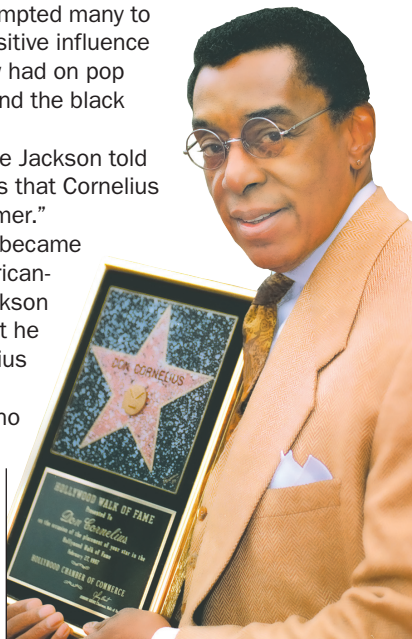
Police officer Sara Faden said authorities have ruled out foul play. Detectives have not found a suicide note and are talking to relatives about his mental state.

His death prompted many to speak of the positive influence he and his show had on pop culture, music and the black community.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson told KNX-Los Angeles that Cornelius "was a transformer."

"'Soul Train' became the outlet for African-Americans," Jackson said, adding that he talked to Cornelius a few days ago and there were no signs Cornelius was upset.

— Associated Press



Dallemand changes mind on private meetings with BOE

After Attorney General's Office calls, meetings with small groups less than quorum are canceled

By ANDREA CASTILLO
acastillo@macon.com

After an inquiry from the state Attorney General's office, Bibb County school Superintendent Romain Dallemand reversed course and will not meet with the school board in small groups Friday that would have been closed to the public.

During the board's Jan. 19 school board meeting, Dallemand said he planned to meet with school board members about the system's forthcoming strategic plan a week before its unveiling Feb. 10.

Those small-group meetings would have been closed because there wouldn't have been a quorum of school board members in any of them, Dallemand said last month. According to board members, the superintendent had been planning to split the eight-member board into groups of four during a morning and afternoon session. Five members constitute a quorum of Bibb's school board members.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Stefan Ritter called the school system's attorney last week after reading The Telegraph's



GRANT BLANKENSHIP/THE TELEGRAPH

Bibb County school Superintendent Romain Dallemand, seen Tuesday in the conference room at the Board of Education offices, has changed plans to meet with small groups of board members about upcoming changes.

story about the Jan. 19 meeting, according to Lauren Kane, spokeswoman for the Attorney General's Office. In an e-mail that school chief legal counsel Randy Howard sent Wednesday to Ritter, "Dr. Dallemand will not be meeting in small group discussions with board members on the Strategic Plan."

SEE DALLEMAND, 3A



Business 4A
Classified 1E
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WEATHER, 6B

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RAPE FROM 1A

Seven teenagers have been charged with the rape of a special-needs student at the school Jan. 19. Three of those students — two 15-year-olds and a 14-year-old — were taken to the Macon YDC after the episode. All of the students will be tried as adults, District Attorney Greg Winters said.

Stephanie Prater, who had been serving as the campus police department's interim police chief, was relieved of duty Tuesday, but school officials would not say for how long or give a reason for her suspension. Sgt. Ulric Bellaire is serving as Bibb's campus police chief.

The rape case has drawn fire and raised plenty of questions, from why campus police veered from traditional practice and investigated the case themselves to why school officials were not more proactive in acknowledging the attack and notifying parents and the public what had happened.

Burns said the case was the first reported violent crime on school grounds in his memory that Macon police weren't asked to take the investigative lead on from the start.

"It's highly unusual," he said.

When city police officers arrived at The Medical Center of Central Georgia on Jan. 20, the day after the attack, a campus police officer was already there and had files in the case, Burns said. The 16-year-old was allegedly raped and sodomized for about an hour in a school restroom.

The campus police officer told Macon police that he'd keep jurisdiction of the case because it had happened on school property, Burns said. A city police officer asked the campus officer about his credentials, and the campus officer replied that he was qualified to take the case.

Macon police helped out that first night at the hospital, in part by providing the standardized kit that medical professionals use to collect evidence in rape cases. Campus police officers don't carry the kits, Burns said.

Macon police and the school system have an agreement that campus officers handle felony incidents on school grounds unless the school system asks for city police assistance, he said. Generally, Macon police take the lead and campus police help out.

Asked whether Macon police could have simply taken control of the investigation, Burns said exact jurisdiction would be a legal question.

He said he first learned of the alleged rape at a Jan. 23 staff meeting and asked Carswell to call the school system. The school system responded that it would investigate the case, he said.

"We were ready to go," Burns said. "We've got a lot more resources, but school property is their jurisdiction."

A week later, on Jan. 30, Dallemand called Carswell and "asked if we'd review the case," Burns said.

It wasn't clear until the Tuesday afternoon news conference, though, that the school system was actually giving the case to Macon police.

Macon police received the campus police incident report Tuesday — which includes the same short narrative as the one released to The Telegraph late Tuesday — along with audio and video files of interviews that the campus police investigator conducted.

Macon police went to the high school Tuesday and took photos. Interviews that campus police conducted are still being transcribed.

On Wednesday, Macon police investigators met with the school police investigator and a representative of the district attorney's office to discuss the case.

After reviewing the files available, "It doesn't sound like he did a bad job," Burns said of the campus police investigator.

The investigator will continue working on the case, helping Macon police. City

Seven teens, ranging in age from 14 to 18, have been charged with the rape of a special-needs student at Northeast High School. All of the students will be tried as adults, said District Attorney Greg Winters.

investigators will probably interview more people as their probe progresses, Burns said.

Questions not answered

Alisha Allen-Carter, assistant to the superintendent, said the school system hasn't changed any of its emergency situation policies since Dallemand became superintendent, but that there were gaps in how those policies were implemented during the Northeast incident.

Allen-Carter couldn't say if there was a crisis team that took the lead in such situations. She said Wednesday afternoon that she would find out that information, but repeated attempts to reach her later in the day were unsuccessful.

She noted that campus police often work together with local law enforcement agencies, citing a gun found at Howard High School a few months ago in which campus police worked alongside Bibb County deputies.

She said she did not know why campus police officials turned away the initial assistance that Macon police offered.

"That's something that Macon police and the campus police department have to discuss," she said. "I'm a third party to that." Bibb County Sheriff Jerry Modena and Chief Deputy David Davis said Wednesday that the sheriff's office has always had strong partnerships with neighboring law enforcement agencies, including the campus police department.

Neither one could recall a time when campus police officials declined help from the sheriff's office, and indeed Modena pointed to recent cases — a bomb threat at a school and a truancy sweep — that involved the sheriff's office, campus police and Macon police.

"For the past 11 years, we've had good relations" with the school system," Modena said. "Generally, they contact us when they've got to have our knowledge."

Davis said the sheriff's office received no contact from campus police asking for assistance, nor was it notified when the incident first took place. He said he learned about the case from reading the newspaper.

Davis said the lead agency in a situation that may have multiple jurisdictions is usually the agency that first receives the call. But in many of those situations, even if the sheriff's office isn't the lead agency, once they are contacted, they see the investigation through to the end.

Davis noted that the campus police "did enough" to arrest seven Northeast students.

"This wasn't a terrible situation where they were not able to make any arrests," he said. "If they had not gotten the suspects as quick as they did, I would have insisted that we take part in (the investigation). ... But this case didn't need that."

He also had praise for Prater.

"Stephanie has been an integral part of our truancy task force," Davis said. "She's given us information, she's coordinated her people with ours. She's let us know about bomb threats and lockdowns at schools located in the county. She's always worked well with us. This particular case seems outside the norm than what we've come to expect with her."

Staff writer Andrea Castillo contributed to this report.

To contact writer Amy Leigh Womack, call 744-4398. To contact writer Phillip Ramati, call 744-4334.

JOB FROM 1A

produce commercial amounts of celulosic ethanol, made from Georgia wood chips.

After shutting down its limited operations early last year, Range attempted to transfer the plant and its \$40 million federal loan guarantee to LanzaTech Freedom Pines. Instead of allowing that deal, the U.S. Department of Agriculture triggered foreclosure on Range Fuels late last year. LanzaTech Freedom Pines subsequently bought the plant on the courthouse steps Jan. 2 for just \$5.1 million.

At other international locations, New Zealand-based parent company LanzaTech Inc. is involved in making ethanol and other chemicals from industrial and landfill waste gases. This will be its first U.S. project, Harmon said.

State and local officials say they plan to meet with LanzaTech leaders in about 10 days to discuss possible job creation commitments. The equipment, which made the plant attractive at auction, was purchased mostly through a \$6.25 million Georgia grant that required Range to create more than 60 jobs by 2015.

"We're looking at tens of jobs in the near term, and hundreds of jobs as we scale to commercial (production)," Harmon said. "I hate to be specific about dates and numbers at this time. The intent is certainly to fulfill and exceed the job commitments made formerly."

"The goal is to take this site and achieve what wasn't achieved before."

LanzaTech Freedom Pines has retained the handful of employees that were still working for Range Fuels and just rehired a former employee, Harmon said.

"Our commitment is to hire locally wherever possible, and people with experience at the plant are an added bonus for us," she said.

Plans for the plant

Harmon said LanzaTech is still evaluating the condition of the plant and its equipment, particularly the gasifier that burns the wood chips. Until that process is completed, probably in three to six months, the company won't know how much it will need to invest at the plant or how long that will take, she said.

Even if the gasifier doesn't end up

DALLEMAND FROM 1A

Board member Gary Bechtel said there are now plans in the works for a called meeting of the full board at 4 p.m. Friday, although the school system has not yet announced it and no agenda was available Wednesday afternoon. Several board members raised concerns previously that the small-group meetings were not transparent.

"I'm glad we're going to be able to hear what (Dallemand) has to say in response to (questions about the meetings) in public," Bechtel said. "The community deserves that, and the board deserves that."

Howard confirmed that he had communicated with Ritter about the matter and discussed it with Dallemand before sending a response to the Attorney General's Office. However, Howard said he would not discuss why the meetings had been canceled, citing attorney-client privilege.

"You would have to talk to Dr. Dal-

lemand about that," Howard said.

Alisha Allen-Carter, assistant to the superintendent, said she would follow up on a Telegraph inquiry about why the small-group meetings were canceled, but she did not.

By state law, meetings of a quorum of members can only be closed to the public to discuss personnel, future acquisition of property or pending litigation.

Now, meetings of public officials when there is no quorum present may be addressed by state lawmakers.

Proposed changes to Georgia's open meetings law would explicitly forbid a governing body from holding meetings with more than two but less than a quorum of members to get around the law's open meetings requirements.

"Openness is always the best option," David Hudson, general counsel to the Georgia Press Association, wrote in an e-mail to The Telegraph. "Elected officials under the Georgia Constitution are designated as 'servants'

working for LanzaTech, the company will move to develop the Soperton plant, company spokesman John Williams said in an e-mail. He said the proximity of waste forest materials, existing infrastructure, local work force and the commitment shown by the state and the local community make the value of the plant purchase "greater than the sum of its parts."

LanzaTech plans to turn wood chips to gas just as Range did. But after that step, the two companies use very different technology.

Range's process was based on catalytic conversion, while LanzaTech uses a patented microbe to convert carbon monoxide gas into fuels and chemicals. LanzaTech will need to reconstruct and add to the plant to accommodate its different process, Harmon said.

The possibilities include ethanol as well as chemicals such as butanediol, butanol, propanol and acetone. These have a variety of applications such as synthetic rubber and solvents, she said. LanzaTech also is trying to develop a "greener" jet fuel and could work on that project in Soperton, Harmon said.

To contact writer S. Heather Duncan, call 744-4225.

of the people. 'Servants' should, as a first principle, give as much information and public access as is possible. Only an overwhelming public interest should lead elected officials to choose an exception to openness, even when an exception is granted by law."

Hollie Manheimer, executive director with the Georgia First Amendment Foundation, also said public governing bodies should operate as openly as possible.

"The Open Meetings Act is designed to benefit the public and allow it to monitor the business of its elected officials," Manheimer said. "The more public business done in the public eye, the better for all concerned, including the public and its elected officials. In fact, the courts of Georgia have even stated that meetings do not have to be closed, and the public business can always be done out in the open."

To contact writer Andrea Castillo, call 744-4331.

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NORTHEAST RAPE CASE

E-mails belie claim that central office not in loop

By AMY LEIGH WOMACK
awomack@macon.com

Two members of the Bibb County school system's command staff were in close contact with the campus police department's chief soon after a girl was allegedly raped at Northeast

High School and praised the department's work in the case. One of them, the assistant to Superintendent Romain Dallemand, received e-mails forwarded by the campus police chief, Stephanie Prater, including a report that Macon police had handed off the investigation

to her department. Prater, 44, was put on administrative leave with pay after a Tuesday news conference, told that she didn't follow policies regarding how members of the school system's administration



Prater

SEE PRATER, 3A

Bond denied for one rape suspect



Antonio Jackson, center, appears before Superior Court Judge Edgar Ennis on Thursday at the Bibb County Law Enforcement Center for a bond hearing connected to his alleged role in the rape of a special-needs student last month at Northeast High School. Ennis denied bond for Jackson, 18.

Prosecutor says Jackson admitted being in bathroom where girl was allegedly raped, also says he entered using "his own power"

By AMY LEIGH WOMACK
awomack@macon.com

A judge denied bond Thursday for an 18-year-old special-needs student charged with raping a girl at Northeast High School on Jan. 19.

Antonio Deaundry Jackson is charged with rape and aggravated sodomy. At least seven male students took turns forcing the 16-year-old girl, a special-needs student herself, to perform sex acts inside a school restroom, according to an arrest warrant signed for the aggravated sodomy

charge Wednesday. The warrant, which includes six sentences about the allegations, provides far more detail than an incident report that the Bibb County school system released Jan. 31, 12

SEE BOND, 4A

Up to 1,140 could leave Robins by end of April

Over 1,200 applied for buyouts

By WAYNE CRENSHAW
wcrenshaw@macon.com

WARNER ROBINS — The number of jobs to be cut at Robins Air Force Base could nearly double under a local initiative that targets the 402nd Maintenance Wing. The base previously had announced plans to cut up to 600 jobs through voluntary buyouts but now is looking to trim another 540 from the maintenance wing, which employs about 9,000. That could mean up to 1,140 people off the payroll by the end of April. Though Maj. Gen. Robert McMahon, commander of the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, announced in January that there would be cuts to the maintenance wing, how many wasn't publicly known until now.

SEE ROBINS, 4A

GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

House expects vote on budget

By RAY HENRY
Associated Press

ATLANTA — Georgia would spend \$300 million on a toll highway meant to alleviate congestion in metro Atlanta and assist farmers who say they are struggling to find enough workers following the state's crackdown on illegal immigrants under an \$18.6 billion budget plan proposed Thursday by House lawmakers. Total state spending would increase just over 1 percent under the plan adopted by the Republican-led House Appropriations Committee. It makes relatively small changes to a proposal earlier this month from Republican Gov. Nathan Deal. House lawmakers could pass

ALSO
■ Randall accuses colleague of handing out personal e-mail address, 1B

SEE BUDGET, 4A

Marine fights conviction for suicide attempt

Military can prosecute under rule against self-injury

By DAVID DISHNEAU
Associated Press

HAGERSTOWN, Md. — A discharged Marine private who slit his wrists in a suicide attempt is fighting his military conviction for deliberately injuring himself, arguing the punishment is inconsistent with the armed forces' efforts to battle a rise in suicides during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It's not clear how often the Marines or any other service branch prosecute active duty

SEE SUICIDE, 4A

THE RAIL
YOUR NEWS EXPRESS

Macon Blues Festival comes to City Auditorium on Saturday

OUT & ABOUT, INSIDE

Georgia State Fair to return this spring

Officials from the company that owns the Georgia State Fair announced Thursday the event will return to Central City Park this spring. The event, more than 150 years old, faced cancellation after the Macon Exchange Club voted in August not to hold a fair in 2012. However, since then, Universal Fairs of Memphis, Tenn., bought the fair and will host the event April 27-May 6. The fair will feature rides, shows, concerts and food, although no specific guests have been announced. The Exchange Club had operated the fair since 1942 but decided to sell it after several consecutive years of low revenues from the event. Universal Fairs made its initial offer to buy the fair in November. The company operates family-friendly focused fairs and festivals in Memphis; Chandler, Ariz.; Bossier City, La.; and Enumclaw, Wash. The Georgia State Fair began in 1846 and moved to Macon in 1851. The fair has operated every year except during the Civil War and in 2009, when it moved to the spring after previously running in October.

— Phillip Ramati

Study: You'll buy less junk food if you pay cash

You'll buy less junk food if you put away your credit (or debit) card and always pay cash, according to a Cornell University study in the Journal of Consumer Research. Unhealthy foods — cookies, potato chips, etc. — are impulse buys, says study author Manoj Thomas. Participants in one shopping test bought 42 percent more junk food (\$14.07) when they paid with a credit card than those paying cash (\$9.89). The method of payment didn't make a difference on good-for-you groceries.

— Chicago Tribune



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PRATER FROM 1A

were kept abreast of the investigation, said Charles E. Cox Jr., Prater's lawyer.

Dallemand said at the news conference that he wasn't aware until Monday that city police weren't part of the investigation.

But Cox said Prater kept her supervisor, Deputy Superintendent Edward Judie, and other members of the central office leadership team updated during the investigation, and he provided The Telegraph copies of e-mails from Prater to her superiors to prove it.

Among Judie's duties as deputy superintendent of student affairs are working with administrators to address discipline problems at schools.

"If there's an established notification protocol she's violated, she's not seen it," Cox said Thursday. "She's done nothing wrong. She handled the investigation appropriately."

Prater has served as a campus police officer for 15 years. She worked as deputy chief from 2000 to 2009 and has served as interim chief twice, Cox said.

Cox said Prater hasn't been told how long she will be suspended or whether she'll be allowed to go back to work.

"It's unclear to us," he said.

She could remain on administrative leave for a maximum 30 days. Cox said Prater "wants and expects to come back to work. She doesn't see why she should be on leave."

Reached Thursday, Prater would say only: "My job is about the kids. I feel like I did what was best for the students.... My heart is with the students."

What the e-mails say

Campus police investigator Corey Goble sent Prater an e-mail at 7:42 p.m. Jan. 20, the night that police went to The Medical Center of Central Georgia to meet with the 16-year-old special-needs student who had allegedly been attacked.

Goble updated Prater, saying that the alleged rape had happened inside Northeast's Mark Smith building. The girl had bathed at least once since the attack, "so sexual assault kit may be in vain," he wrote.

"Members of Crisis Line are on scene with victim, and MPD Persons Crimes Div has turned case over to us," Goble wrote. "They will be providing assistance with their Juv sex crimes unit, and they are en route."

Prater forwarded Goble's message to Alisha Allen-Carter, assistant to the superintendent, at 7:45 p.m. that Friday, saying that officers were going to try to locate video footage.

Allen-Carter responded at 8:05 p.m., saying "Thank you!!"

Prater sent another update to Judie and Allen-Carter at 6:46 a.m. Jan. 21, a Saturday, saying that campus police had two students in custody. One of the students confessed, and that student identified three more students.

Although phone records weren't available Thursday, Cox said Prater told Judie that she'd talked with Deputy Police Chief Mike Carswell on Jan. 23 regarding the case.

She'd talked with Carswell on her personal cell phone and finished the conversation right before a meeting with Judie, Cox said.

At that time, campus police had made four arrests in the case and didn't need city police officers to take over, he said.

Other e-mails show that Prater updated Judie and Allen-Carter on Jan. 24, five days after the attack, at 3:19 p.m., saying two more students had been charged.

Prater, who has been on the force since the 1990s, sent another update to Allen-Carter and Judie on Jan. 25 at 4:16 p.m., saying that District Attorney Greg Winters said "we are doing an excel-

lent job and handling this case extremely well."

She went on to write that Macon police leaders were upset, but no memorandum of understanding existed that would "support them immediately or in consultation, for taking over cases that clearly occur in our jurisdiction."

Prater expressed gratitude for the school system's trusting her leadership and decisions.

At 4:21 p.m., Allen-Carter replied, "You all have been awesome. The media hasn't even contacted me today. I told them that I was done commenting, and I meant I was done commenting."

Acting immediately

Campus police saw the need to act immediately after learning of the Jan. 19 incident, said a school system employee familiar with the investigation, adding, "It would have been a nightmare getting another agency in because (school officials) are so tight-lipped when it comes to an outside agency getting information."

Goble, who had recently been hired after working at the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office, has eight years of experience, and it was decided that he had the credentials to investigate the matter.

In the past, campus police had typically handed more serious cases to local law enforcement agencies because

the campus officers didn't have experience investigating such crimes. However, Bibb County school policy notes that all felonies "under Georgia law shall be immediately reported to the school district police for investigation and prosecution."

Campus police proceeded with the case because they had immediate access to school files that, in the end, supplied information about where the suspects in the episode lived.

Campus police worked over the weekend and made arrests that would have been problematic during school hours. In the past, school officials have bristled when campus police tried to do their jobs during school hours and "interrupted" classes, the school employee said.

Prater was told she was "a discredit to the entire board of education" for not informing the superintendent's office that campus police hadn't called in outside investigative help, the school employee said.

Dallemand's response

Dallemand said he received a call from Allen-Carter about the rape investigation on Jan. 20, the day after the incident.

His instructions to her were to have the victim's mother call Macon police.

"The order was to call the Macon Police Department. My understanding is it was a capital case and

Macon police had to handle it," he said.

Understanding that the victim's mother had called Macon police, Dallemand said he was under the impression the city department was handling the investigation from that point forward.

When Dallemand met with his staff the following Monday, he said he was still under the impression that Macon police were in charge. He said that when he found out almost two weeks after the incident that campus police — and not Macon police — were handling the investigation, he personally contacted Carswell, Macon's deputy police chief, and asked Macon police to take over the investigation.

Dallemand said he did not receive regular updates about the investigation in nearly two weeks. Under the impression that Macon police had the case, he said he thought there were no updates and that the two police departments would communicate directly with each other.

Dallemand said he was not aware of the e-mails that Prater sent her superiors or an e-mail that the central administrative office sent out Jan. 24 about the case. He said he would not comment on the ongoing investigation.

Where Macon police stand

Carswell and Macon Po-

lice Chief Mike Burns said Thursday that their department is still reviewing files from campus police. Burns said he has seen copy of a video from Northeast, but there was some delay in getting the two departments' technology to sync up. Burns said his department also is in the process of transcribing interviews conducted by campus investigators, and that he hasn't yet seen many of those supplemental reports.

Burns said campus investigators did a satisfactory job with their investigation, given that seven teenagers have been charged with rape and other crimes, but there are additional interviews he wants to conduct to make certain the investigation is airtight.

Macon police detectives could face hindrances as the investigation continues, Burns said. For example, while campus investigators were able to interview some of the suspects without attorneys, those charged in the case have since obtained lawyers. Any subsequent interrogation of the suspects would have to be done with the lawyers' permission, Burns said. If the attorneys were uncooperative, his investigators would have to rely on the notes and transcripts from the previous interviews.

Burns added that officials from the district attorney's office have asked Macon investigators not to re-inter-

view the 16-year-old in the case, citing her emotional trauma from the incident.

"We're going to give her more time to recover," he said.

Burns said there are several things his department would have done differently had they had charge of the case from the beginning. He noted the length of time the school system took to respond to an Open Records Act request made by The Telegraph for the campus police report. It took a week for the school system to send out the report, and even then, it was heavily redacted.

"If we get an open records report, we would have given you what we could," Burns said. "If there was a reason why we couldn't, we would have let you know why we needed (the extra time)."

Burns said the main police report he received from the school system didn't have any more information than the one received by The Telegraph. Most of the information about the case has come from supplemental reports, he said. Those supplemental reports are not subject to public disclosure under the law.

"Our reports are more in-depth with that," he said.

Staff writers Joe Kovac Jr., Phillip Ramati and Andrea Castillo contributed to this report. To contact writer Amy Leigh Womack, call 744-4398.

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‘Extremely bright and extraordinarily ... curious’

Records note McDaniel’s skills, ties to District Attorney’s Office and judges

By AMY LEIGH WOMACK and JOE KOVAC JR.
Telegraph staff

One day last July while Macon police were building their murder case against Stephen McDaniel, a letter addressed to him from an office at the Bibb County Courthouse was mailed to his parents’ house.

In a newspaper interview published the same day, McDaniel’s mother told how her son, a recent Mercer Universi-

ty law graduate, had aspirations of becoming a prosecutor, a Supreme Court justice even.

At the time, McDaniel, then two months shy of his 26th birthday, was entering the third week of what has become a seven-month stay at the Bibb jail.

In the months before he was locked up, he had been job hunting. He applied for at least one. On April 15, 2011, McDaniel handed in his résumé and filled out 11 pages of prospective-employee paper-

work at the county human resources of-
fice down the hill from his Georgia Avenue apartment.

He wanted to be a Bibb Superior Court law clerk. Landing such a position would have been considered a good job for someone fresh out of law school.

On July 15, a letter went out to “Mr. Stephen Mark McDaniel.” It was from the Mulberry Street courthouse. It was a re-

SEE MCDANIEL, 10A



BEAU CABELL/THE TELEGRAPH.
Stephen McDaniel appears in court for the first time on a murder charge in August.

NORTHEAST RAPE CASE

E-mails show worry about inquiry

By ANDREA CASTILLO
acastillo@macon.com

A Bibb County school board member raised concerns about the rape investigation at Northeast High School days before Superintendent Romain Dallemand publicly acknowledged gaps in the school system’s handling of the situation.

In a news release Jan. 24, Bibb County schools’ communications department said campus police were investigating the case. Two days later, school board member Lynn Farmer raised her concerns.



Dallemand

SEE E-MAILS, 10A

Cavaliers surge onward



The Mount de Sales Cavaliers clashed with Arlington Christian on Monday night during a GISA Region 2-AAA tournament game and emerged victorious with a 72-56 win. Above, Mount de Sales’ Stewart Rich is introduced prior to the game. Right, Mount de Sales head coach Scott Wynn yells instructions to his team during the game. The Cavaliers will move on to face Griffin Christian in the semifinals on Tuesday at Stratford Academy. The complete story is on Page 1B.

JASON VORHEES/THE TELEGRAPH



Early bloomers



Blooms pop on a Forsythia bush in a yard on Pierce Drive South. Recent warm weather has drawn the blooms out a little early this year.

WOODY MARSHALL/THE TELEGRAPH

Cognitive screenings help show warning signs of dementia

The Associated Press

Detecting early warning signs of dementia can be difficult, but there are several types of cognitive screenings — quick, simple tests of memory and thinking skills — that can help a doctor decide if it’s time to recommend a more in-depth exam.

One example: Tell someone three random words. Then time how quickly the person can draw a clock face, with the

hands pointing at 11:10. Then ask how many of those original words he or she still remembers after the distraction of the clock task.

The Alzheimer’s Association is working with experts around the country to identify which kinds of screening tools work best in the hands of primary-care physicians, says association vice president Beth Kallmyer.

SEE SCREENING, 10A

THE RAIL

YOUR NEWS EXPRESS

Peach County mulls return to five-day school week

LOCAL & STATE, 3A

PETA argues trained whales are slaves

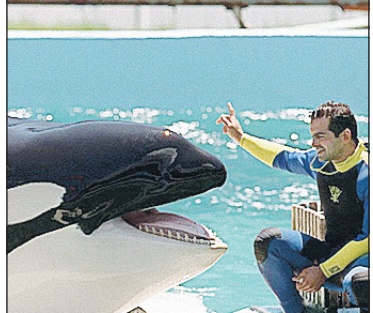
A federal judge in San Diego has heard arguments in a case that could determine whether animals enjoy the same constitutional protection against slavery as human beings.

U.S. District Judge Jeffrey Miller listened Monday to arguments from lawyers for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals about their lawsuit against Sea World, in which they have named five wild-captured orcas as plaintiffs.

PETA lawyers say the orcas are being treated like slaves when they are forced to perform daily at Sea World parks in San Diego and Orlando, Fla.

Lawyers for Sea World have asked the judge to dismiss the lawsuit.

— Associated Press



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65/41

Sunshine in the afternoon

WEATHER, 10B

Father sent e-mails before killing self, sons

By MIKE BAKER and GENE JOHNSON
Associated Press

GRAHAM, Wash. — Josh Powell's boys were coming for a visit, and he had preparations to make.

He boxed up their books and toys and brought them to a charity. He carried heavy cans of gasoline inside his house.

He thought about what to write in the final e-mails he'd send out: where people could find his financial accounts, how they could shut off his utilities. He didn't mention his wife, Susan Powell, missing

for the past two years.

When the boys finally arrived in a car driven by a social worker Sunday, everything was ready to go. They ran inside to see him. He locked the door before the social worker could reach it.

She could smell the gas, which by now was splashed throughout the home. She called for help.

As authorities continued searching through the charred rubble of the home Monday, they released new details about what they described as Powell's deliberation in killing himself and

his children, who had been removed from his care — a horrifying climax to a long, bizarre saga. They found the two 5-gallon gas cans inside.

"This was definitely a deliberate, planned-out event," said Pierce County Sheriff's Detective Ed Troyer.

Autopsy reports were pending, but Troyer said there were no gunshot wounds.

Josh Powell had long been identified as a person of interest in his wife's disappearance, and last week a judge denied another request for his boys to be re-

turned to him.

Powell claimed that the night his wife vanished in December 2009, he took the boys on a midnight camping trip in freezing temperatures — a story neither her parents nor police believe.

Asked why Josh Powell had never been arrested, Nielsen said: "In a criminal case of this nature, you've got one shot. You've got to make sure everything is done right."

He said investigators were making progress and had hoped to make an arrest within the year.

E-MAILS FROM 1A

"Having the Campus Police investigate the incident at Northeast is a plaintiff attorney's dream come true," Farmer wrote in an e-mail to the superintendent and other school board members.

She raised concerns about potential litigation against the system and a lack of response to the media. She also said she was concerned that Patrick Millsaps, an attorney at Atlanta-based Hall Booth Smith and Slover, which represents the school system, was not notified immediately about the Northeast High investigation.

Farmer's e-mail and others between Dallemand and school board members were obtained by The Telegraph through an open records request.

In all, seven teenagers have been charged with the rape of a special-needs student at the school Jan. 19. Three of those students — two 15-year-olds and a 14-year-old — were taken to the Macon Regional Youth Detention Center after the incident. All seven will be tried as adults, District Attorney Greg Winters said.

The case has prompted questions about whether Bibb County campus police should have handled the case or whether the Macon Police Department should have been called in to take the lead.

According to Bibb's campus police policy, campus police do not need to call an outside authority to investigate matters on school grounds.

The case has also raised questions about why it took Dallemand so long to learn that Macon police were not involved in the investigation.

Dallemand held a news conference Jan. 31 — 12 days after the alleged rape — saying he had found out only the day before that Macon police weren't part of the investigation. Dallemand said he contacted Macon's Deputy Police Chief Mike Carswell the day before to ask his department to take over the case. Stephanie Prater, who was serving as the interim campus police chief, was placed on paid administrative leave.

Dallemand e-mail contradicts Prater's claim about MPD involvement

Earlier that day, Dallemand sent an update to board members about the Northeast case. That e-mail was sent 12 minutes before his 3 p.m. news conference. In that statement, Dallemand said he learned from media reports

that Macon police were not handling the investigation at Northeast.

At 3:01 p.m., board member Gary Bechtel wrote back to Dallemand, saying that on Jan. 28, Bechtel made in-house attorney Randy Howard aware that Macon police were not involved in the investigation.

Less than two hours later, Dallemand responded to the entire school board, writing "Mr. Howard followed through with Interim Chief Stephanie Prater, and per his conversations with her, MPD was involved. It was not until yesterday that we learned that Interim Chief Prater had excluded the Macon Police Department."

When contacted Monday afternoon, Howard would not comment on Dallemand's e-mail that referred to Howard's contact with Prater.

"I have no response," Howard said Monday afternoon. "That's attorney-client (privilege)."

Just before 5 p.m. on Jan. 31, board members and Dallemand sent a quick succession of e-mails.

At 4:51 p.m., Bechtel wrote, "I hope you agree with me that that she should not have made that decision unilaterally."

Thirteen minutes later, Dallemand responded, "I do agree, I have dealt with this and I cannot address this matter in an e-mail."

At 5:06 p.m., Farmer expressed concern about how long it took Dallemand to respond to her Jan. 26 e-mail.

"Your statement that you just found out yesterday leads me to be concerned that you are not receiving my e-mails," Farmer wrote. "Are you receiving e-mails from us in a timely manner, or do these go to someone else? Is there some other way that you would prefer for us to communicate concerns to you?"

Dallemand responded at 5:27 p.m. that he had asked Howard to follow up on Farmer's e-mail.

"At this time, we will need to refrain from any more statements as I would not want to appear to violate any open meeting law," Dallemand wrote.

Charles Cox, Prater's attorney, said Monday that Howard had several conversations with Prater during the week of Jan. 23 about the investigation.

From those conversations, Howard received updates about Bibb County campus police's progress and involvement with the case, Cox said. Prater's attorney also pointed to media reports that said campus police were handling the case.

"It's puzzling why they would act like they didn't know when anyone who read a newspaper knew that," Cox said.

While Cox said he had not seen Dallemand's e-mail about Howard's statement, he said Prater's e-mails and other information contradict the superintendent's statement.

"It makes no sense for Dr. Dallemand to make a factual assertion like that in an e-mail," Cox said.

Board members respond

Six days after the alleged rape, Bechtel made the district's Atlanta law firm aware of the incident, he said.

Bechtel said he and other board members didn't have contact with Dallemand before the superintendent's Jan. 31 news conference except through e-mail. Bechtel said he still hasn't spoken in person with Dallemand about the case.

Bechtel said he has serious concerns about how the situation has been handled, especially with Dallemand saying he wasn't kept up-to-date about the investigation despite e-mails about the investigation from Prater to Deputy Superintendent Edward Judie and Dallemand's assistant, Alisha Allen-Carter.

Bechtel said he was even more concerned that Dallemand didn't take a more personal proactive approach, given the seriousness of the alleged incident.

"You need to recognize the seriousness of it and take control of what is occurring," Bechtel said. "He's the leader of the district. He should've stepped in much sooner to supervise and review what was happening. I'm real concerned."

Bechtel said he also was "disturbed" by Prater's decision not to include Macon police in the investigation.

"Given the same set of circumstances, I'd have brought (Macon police) in a lot sooner," he said.

That thought was echoed by Farmer, who said she thinks former Superintendent Sharon Patterson and former interim Superintendent Sylvia McGee would have made the calls sooner to make sure they were up to date on the case.

"Certainly, as CEO, that's what I expect (from Dallemand)," she said. "Ultimately, the buck stops with him."

Farmer said she still hasn't heard when the board might meet with Dallemand to review the gaps in how the situation was handled.

"We haven't had a conversation," she said. "I think we should've met in executive session about this."

Staff writer Phillip Ramati contributed to this report. To contact writer Andrea Castillo, call 744-4331.

FINANCES FROM 1A

Parks and Recreation has spent more than half of its planned payroll for the year, but that's because it runs more programs in the summer and fall, he said.

Others, such as police administration, had higher-than-expected costs; a spike in gas prices and repairs to an aging fleet of cars drove that increase, Walker said.

The city landfill will also come in over budget this year due to "very costly" upgrades demanded by the state, he said.

Bowden Golf Course will run a deficit, as expected — but "probably less of a deficit than we anticipated," Walker said. The course has taken in \$200,000 and spent \$290,581 in six months of fiscal 2012, he said. That's a deficit of about \$91,000 so far, but the city had expected a deficit of \$246,000, Walker said.

The mayor's office has also spent less than last year, he said; but that brought a question from Timley and Councilwoman Elaine Lucas as to whether the city is still paying dues for Mayor Robert Reichert.

Last fall city records revealed that taxpayers had been paying Reichert's membership dues at Idle Hour Golf and Country Club since December 2007. The dues were more than \$400 per month, for a total of about \$18,000. Reichert defended that as providing access to a social setting that would impress visiting dignitaries and potential business developers.

The city also paid his state and national bar association dues, which cost \$770 in 2010. Reichert, an attorney, said that's justified because the city benefits from his legal expertise and prestige.

"Are the dues for Idle Hour still being paid out of city funds?" Lucas asked Monday.

"No ma'am," Reichert replied.

Information Technology Director Stephen Masteller said his department stayed

in budget except for a few hundred dollars to replace office furniture that "fell apart," but that set off a debate on whether department heads should be punished for exceeding their spending limits.

Ellington stressed that no one accused Masteller of any misdeed. But Councilman Henry Ficklin said Timley had sponsored a successful ordinance to impose a \$500 fine on department heads who went over budget without council approval.

Timley called for that ordinance to be applied in several cases described in the budget review.

"You can't allow department heads to spend money that hasn't been budgeted," he said.

Ellington said council expects to see requests for budget changes except in emergencies. Councilman Virgil Watkins asked if that formal request was all that's needed to satisfy the law by the end of the fiscal year.

"So he has until July to correct the problem?" Watkins asked, referring to any department head who overspent.

"Yes," Walker said.

Ellington said the restriction was imposed years ago for good reason, but now he would be open to permitting a "limited amount" of small transfers within department line-items without council approval.

Walker has been serving as both finance director and city chief administrative officer since the September departure of CAO Thomas as Thomas.

Ficklin said the city charter demands a separation of those jobs.

"The law is clear that we have to have a finance director and a CAO," he said.

Reichert said that will be discussed at a council work session next week.

"It is our intention, as we discussed up in Athens, to make a resolution of this that would be acceptable to council," he said.

Overall, city spending was running below 50 percent of budget as of Dec. 31, the halfway point in Macon's fiscal year, Internal Auditor Stephanie Jones said.

To contact writer Jim Gaines, call 744-4489.

SCREENING FROM 1A

Screenings aside, Kallmyer says one of the most important things a doctor can ask is whether anything in your daily life has changed recently. That's something that an affected person might or might not have noticed,

or might be afraid to answer truthfully — but that consulting a family member might elicit.

"The reality is, this is tricky," she said. "When you have a doctor's appointment that's less than half an hour and may be as short as 15 minutes, these things are really challenging."

MCDANIEL FROM 1A

ply to his application, sent from the every place where McDaniel would soon, on more than one occasion, be led, handcuffed and shackled, accused of killing, decapitating and dismembering Lauren Giddings, his 27-year-old neighbor and law school classmate.

"Your application and documents for the position of Law Clerk with the Bibb County Superior Court have been reviewed by the Superior Court Judges," the letter began. "They have selected another candidate."

* * *

McDaniel's application, complete with his employment history, job references, letters of recommendation and college transcripts, were obtained in a recent open-records request by The Telegraph.

The documents, 24 pages in all, shed light on some of the connections — peripheral as they may be — that McDaniel has to the inner circles of the local legal system that could send him to death row.

In 2010, in the spring semester of his second year at law school, he was an unpaid clerk for Superior Court Judge Edgar Ennis. The judge has recused himself from presiding over the capital murder case against McDaniel, whose

On his résumé, McDaniel wrote that he was "skilled at multi-tasking," "adept at quickly learning new tasks," and that he was a "persuasive writer and speaker ... capable of working independently or alongside others."

scheduled Tuesday arraignment was postponed last week. No new date has been set.

In his 2011 spring semester, McDaniel was an unpaid clerk for the Bibb District Attorney's Office. But the meticulous McDaniel, whose handwriting is so precise and carefully crafted that it almost looks computer-generated, erred on the dates. He listed the wrong year, mistakenly citing his time there as lasting from February through May 2010.

McDaniel noted in his job-history form that his duties at the District Attorney's office included "Case preparation, Witness interviews, Appellate court analysis, Writing case summary memoranda, Drafting accusations, Gathering case materials."

He graduated the month the clerkship ended last May.

The only other employment McDaniel mentioned on the job-history sheet was summer work with his house-painter father. For 10 years, from 1997 until 2007, McDaniel wrote that his responsibilities as a painter included "Task assessment, Speaking with employers, Indepen-

dent work completion."

He listed a starting salary of "\$0" and an ending salary of "\$10 per hour."

* * *

McDaniel's résumé cites his 3.2 grade-point average from his undergraduate studies at Mercer.

An honor graduate from Parkview High in Gwinnett County, he had enrolled at Mercer in August 2004 after winning an academic scholarship.

He graduated in December 2007 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. McDaniel's major was in a course of study called "Managed Academic Path to Success."

He started law school in fall 2008. Halfway through his final semester last spring, he had a low-B average.

On his résumé, McDaniel wrote that he was "skilled at multi-tasking," "adept at quickly learning new tasks," and that he was a "persuasive writer and speaker ... capable of working independently or alongside others."

Floyd Buford, McDaniel's attorney, said Monday that his defense team has interviewed more than 30 people about his client. "The general consensus," Buford said, "was that he was very bright."

McDaniel's résumé also notes a couple of other gigs, including a job in the fall of 2007 as a promotions-and-marketing assistant for Mercer Athletics, where he "planned and executed promotions at sporting events."

In summers, from 2002 until 2004, McDaniel said he was a stage manager and director's assistant for a drama camp in Lilburn, his hometown.

McDaniel's résumé lists three references: his father; Ennis, the judge; and Mercer law professor Jack Sammons.

Sammons was one of two law professors who supplied letters of recommendation for McDaniel.

The other professor, Patrick Longan, wrote that McDaniel "is extremely bright and extraordinarily intellectually curious. Mr. McDaniel also has a marvelous even-keeled temperament."

Asked about his recommend-

ing McDaniel, Longan said Monday, "That's really a subject I don't want to comment on."

Sammons, in his letter, described McDaniel as "a careful researcher, a diligent and trustworthy worker."

"Stephen," Sammons wrote, "is attentive to detail ... He is efficient and focused and yet creative and insightful — a lovely rare combination of virtues. Stephen is also extraordinarily pleasant, very relaxed in his manner, and very thoughtful of others."

Sammons closed his letter saying how pleased he was to have had even a partial role in what, for McDaniel, would no doubt be "a terrific legal career."

Asked Monday if his perceptions of McDaniel had changed, Sammons said, "Let's just say that what I said in the letter were my perceptions of Stephen at the time that I wrote the letter. Everything that I said in the letter was an honest assessment of what I saw, his potential as an attorney."

At the Walter F. George School of Law, according to paperwork McDaniel submitted for the Superior Court clerkship, McDaniel was one of 131 students in his class.

Four months before he graduated, he ranked 111th.

To contact writer Amy Leigh Womack, call 744-4398. To contact writer Joe Kovac Jr., call 744-4397.

Dallemand's
tenure packed
with trips
near and far



Records show at least 18 overnight trips and \$16,000 spent on travel- and conference-related expenses in his first year, as well as system-issued credit cards over the spending limit.

By ANDREA CASTILLO and RODNEY MANLEY
Telegraph staff

In November, while he was on a trip to a black educators conference in New Orleans, Bibb County school Superintendent Romain Dallemand dined mostly from room service and in-hotel restaurants at the Hilton Riverside. But Dallemand also treated one of his deputy superintendents, Edward Judie Jr., to a night out at Ruth's Chris Steak House, dining on lamb chops, New York strip and a crab-meat cocktail called a "Crabtini." The

men paid out of pocket for three glasses of wine, but the rest of the \$170.11 tab went on the school-system-issued credit card that Dallemand uses. Expense reports, credit card statements, and hotel and flight bills obtained by The Telegraph — more than 1,000 pages — show a pattern of frequent travel since Dallemand became superintendent of the Bibb County school system in February 2011. Dallemand has been on at least 18 overnight trips since he became superin-

SEE DALLEMAND, 9A



A giant model of a large mouth bass is displayed in one of the galleries at the Go Fish Education Center near the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter in Perry.

WOODY MARSHALL/THE TELEGRAPH

Go Fish flops
in first year

"The first year, there was probably not the proper amount of marketing done. It's a great facility, and I think we will get a lot more tourism traffic now that there is some signage on the interstate. It's one of those things that's a work in progress."

Sen. Ross Tolleson, R-Perry, who chairs the Natural Resources Committee

By WAYNE CRENSHAW
wcrenshaw@macon.com

PERRY — When state officials announced plans to build the Go Fish Georgia Educational Center in Perry in 2007, they predicted annual attendance of 200,000. By the time it opened in October 2010, the projection had dropped to 100,000. As it turned out, even that was too ambitious. The center in reality drew about 15,000 in its first 12 months of op-

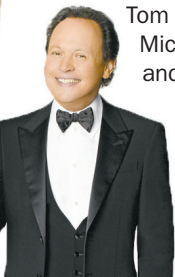
eration, giving plenty of ammunition to those who criticized then-Gov. Sonny Perdue for spending \$19 million on the center and statewide mega-boat ramp construction during a budget crisis. Cutbacks at the time included furloughs and layoffs of state employees. The boat ramps, which included large parking areas, were intended to draw fishing tournaments to the

SEE FISH, 4A



Crystal to the rescue for Oscars

84th annual Academy Awards Show
8:30 p.m., ABC



The Oscar ceremony has much to prove Sunday, including whether a blockbuster-free field can draw a TV audience and if Billy Crystal's host routine remains a crowd-pleaser. Crystal should have the audience's goodwill in his ninth Oscar gig since he came to the rescue after Eddie Murphy dropped out as host. Among the high-wattage presenters are Halle Berry, Tom Cruise, Natalie Portman, Michael Douglas, Penelope Cruz and Angelina Jolie. Nominees in the lead acting categories include Viola Davis, Meryl Streep, George Clooney and Jean Dujardin.

— Associated Press

The letters came home but he didn't

In the letters he wrote home, Jerome "Jerry" Blumberg would tell stories about Patton's Army and the march across Europe. Sometimes his words were filled with hope. Other times, you could read the fear between the lines. He addressed them to his father. The two had a special relationship. Jerry was the oldest of Reuben and Alice Blumberg's five children. It took weeks for his letters to travel across all those battlefields, mountains, forests and white-



Ed Grisamore
gris@macon.com

caps and finally reach the house on The Prado in Macon. One time, he told about being surrounded by German soldiers and having to hide in an attic. Another time, he complained about it being so cold that the ink in his pen was frozen.



Jerome "Jerry" Blumberg

His family could almost hear him chuckling as he shared a story about "borrowing" a battery from an Army jeep and hooking up

two wires and a light bulb so he could see to write at night. At the end of every letter, he said this: "It is almost over, and I will see you soon." Indeed, the war was nearing its end on Feb. 28, 1945. In another six weeks, both Hitler and Mussolini would be dead. In another two months, Germany would offer its unconditional surrender. But Feb. 28 was also the day — 67 years ago this Tuesday — Blumberg's

SEE GRIS, 10A



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60/43

Increasing clouds; cold; drizzle developing late

WEATHER, 8B

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DALLEMAND FROM 1A

tendent.

The documents also touch on several issues related to travel and credit card spending in the last year.

Records show that the spending limit on two credit cards used for staff travel has been increased, and the spending limit on one of the cards has more than doubled in the course of a year.

More than once during the year, bills for those cards came in higher than the spending limits, and other documents indicate that the system's chief financial officer would not sign off on some of the spending.

This past July was a particularly busy travel month for Dallemand. He flew to Vancouver, British Columbia, for a conference on technology that month. The tab: \$1,355.19 in hotel costs, another \$728.07 in airfare, and \$670 to register for the conference.

There were also bills for taxi services and meals, including a \$52.18 dinner at a place called The Winking Judge Pub.

Later that same month, Dallemand was in Denver for another conference, this time a meeting of hospital-ity and restaurant educators. That travel bill included \$440.35 for airfare and \$1,527.69 for the hotel room. His room at the Grand Hyatt Denver, the conference site, was \$219 a night — plus an additional \$35 a night “guest room upgrade.”

Dallemand's travels also included trips to Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, Detroit and Charleston, S.C. — all within his first six months at the helm of Bibb's schools.

During his first year as superintendent, Dallemand spent at least \$16,000 on travel, lodging, meals and conference registration fees, the documents showed. That total does not include all expenses for other employees who sometimes accompanied him on trips. And the records do not indicate whether Dallemand or the other employees repaid any of the costs above the state's per-diem allowances.

A closer look

A Feb. 16 budget status report showed that \$10,000 was allotted for Dallemand's travel for fiscal 2012, which began July 1, 2011. The report indicated that more than \$11,100 already had been made in payments for the fiscal year to date — with more than four months left in the year.

Records obtained by The Telegraph did not include all receipts, and not all of the trips could be documented completely. However, some of Dallemand's out-of-town travel included:

- Seattle, March 6-8, 2011, Dallemand submitted \$1,088.60 in lodging, meals, taxi and excess baggage fees.
- San Francisco, April 8-13, National School Board Association annual conference. Dallemand's hotel bill at the Marriott San Francisco Marquis totaled \$1,245.95 and included room service charges

of \$64.78 and three separate charges of \$32.32. Also on Dallemand's credit card statement were charges of \$120 and \$75 to the Grand Limousine company. Dallemand's registration fee for the conference was \$980.

- Chicago, April 22-25, for a meeting with PROACT, the search firm he used to help fill leadership positions on his staff. The trip cost \$353.35 in airfare and \$227.96 in lodging. Another \$76.10 was charged to Dallemand's school system credit card for a meal at a hotel restaurant and another in-room meal.
- Savannah, June 16-19.

While attending the Georgia School Board Association's summer conference, Dallemand and school board members dined at the Chart House, running up a \$702.75 bill on items such as calamari, lobster tail, crab-stuffed mushrooms and lava cake. The trip also included a \$130.07 dinner at Rocks on the River. Dallemand's hotel bill at the Mansion on Forsyth Street totaled



Bibb County school Superintendent Romain Dallemand, seen at a news conference in January, has incurred extensive travel-related expenses during his first year — including some that the school system's chief financial officer wouldn't sign off on.

\$355.42 for lodging, parking and room service.

- Detroit, no date documented, but Dallemand submitted a request for payment in June of \$443.35 for airfare and \$101.05 for lodging.
- Orlando, Fla., Oct. 2-4.

Documents indicate that Dallemand stayed at the Loews Portofino Bay Hotel at Universal Orlando. Dallemand's credit card statement showed a \$115 charge to Delta for a flight into Orlando but no lodging charged. Receipts show he paid by check for a \$63.25 meal at the hotel.

- Hartford, Conn., Oct. 11-14. Dallemand attended a conference with employees assigned to the new Welcome Center near Hutching Career Center. Airfare alone for the trip was \$5,082.10, and lodging was \$2,814.65. Documents show that \$6,070.01 was wired to the charge card to cover costs.

Other destinations and expenses charged to the credit card that Dallemand uses included:

- Atlanta, Feb. 24-25, 2011: \$179.93 lodging.
- Charleston, S.C., June 21-26: \$224.92 lodging, \$61.86 parking, \$51 transportation, \$57 at T-Bonz Grill and \$77.70 at RB's Seafood (snow crab entree).
- Athens, Ga., Oct. 18-20: \$373.17 lodging and meals.
- Atlanta, Nov. 30-Dec. 3: \$664.57 lodging, parking and room service.
- Atlanta, Dec. 8-10: \$531.74 lodging, \$84.96 parking and in-room dining.
- Huntsville, Ala.: Jan. 6-7, 2012, \$142.55 lodging, \$63 Ruth's Chris Suite Service.
- Tallahassee, Fla.: Jan. 21, \$370.13 lodging.
- Athens, Feb. 5-7: \$339.72 lodging.
- Houston, Texas, Feb. 13-21: \$815 registration fee. Staff members said Dallemand was at work Feb. 21.

Looking for new ideas

When school leaders create a budget for the upcoming year, they may not always know what kind of spending they will ultimately need, said Ron Collier, the school system's chief financial officer. Sometimes the school system will spend more than budgeted and sometimes less, he said. Whatever the budget may not cover may be paid for from the \$1.4 million in staff and operational contingency funds, he said.

Dallemand, asked about his extensive travel, said the trips were needed to help bring in new ideas that will help transform the school system.

“The ideas will not come from inside Macon. The ideas need to come from outside Macon, outside the state, outside of the country.”

The documents also show that school administrators and others also traveled extensively in the past year, sometimes with Dallemand, sometimes without. Dallemand said their trips were

“I’d have a question with 18 trips and whether he’s spending the required time in the district to do what he was hired to do, to provide leadership to staff and the students.”

Bibb school board member Gary Bechtel

consistent with travel that school system employees were already taking.

Another document includes a Jan. 16 excess baggage ticket from Delta with the airport code for Myrtle Beach, S.C., and a note that says “SC trip per Shirley (Fussell) 1/20/12.” However, no other items related to a January trip to the Palmetto State could be found in the documents.

Dallemand said the South Carolina trip was taken during personal vacation time and paid for with his own money.

There were also receipts for meals in Tallahassee, Fla., on Jan. 26, 2012, with a handwritten note that they cost more than the daily spending allowance for meals. Dallemand said he went to Tallahassee to meet with U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and a group of 50 educators.

After an initial interview about details of his travel, Dallemand would not take follow-up questions from The Telegraph.

Planned, canceled travel

Bibb's top administrators don't plan to slow down their travel any time soon. In fact, Dallemand said he plans to send employees to Finland later this year to learn about their practices in early childhood education.

Besides the travel he's already taken, Dallemand is scheduled to fly to New York City in April, according to the documents.

The documents also provided details of travel plans that Dallemand intended to make — but ultimately canceled.

On Dec. 8, Dallemand received e-mail confirmation of his \$1,865 registration fee for an Oxford Round Table discussion on early childhood education in England in March.

Dallemand forwarded the conference confirmation information to accounting manager Vicki Hulett right after receiving it. A handwritten note on a copy of the e-mail indicates “Being cancelled per e-mail 12/12/11 no credit on this bill.”

On Dec. 12, Dallemand wrote back to an Oxford Round Table representative: “I regret that I will have to withdraw my registration due to a conflict with a Board date. Please cancel my registration for Childhood Education. Please confirm cancellation. Thanks.”

The event is scheduled for March 11-15, according to Oxford's website. That would conflict with the school board's scheduled March 15 meeting. However, Dallemand registered to attend the

conference only on March 11 and 12.

Dallemand said he decided not to take the trip because the system is in the middle of discussions on his strategic plan for the district.

Some of the documents Dallemand submitted for reimbursement have raised questions from employees in the system's accounting department, the school documents showed.

Several of the meals for Dallemand and his staff, not just those from the Tallahassee trip, included handwritten notes indicating that they had cost more than the daily spending limits that the state allows.

State employees can get reimbursed \$6 for breakfast, \$7 for lunch and \$15 for dinner. In high-cost areas of the state — Chatham, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Glynn and Richmond counties — employees can receive reimbursements of \$7 for breakfast, \$9 for lunch and \$20 for dinner.

In an e-mail from June 2011, Shirley Fussell, Dallemand's administrative assistant, asked then-school board attorney Warren Plowden to clarify the part of the superintendent's contract that addresses his expense reimbursements. Fussell's e-mail indicated that Collier, the school system's CFO, said the school system could not pay for meetings Dallemand had with prospective job candidates, as well as lunches with local leaders, while Dallemand wanted to know if those lunches were covered in his contract.

In his response, Plowden wrote that he thought Dallemand could be reimbursed for those meals as part of the “reasonable expenses in the discharge of his duties.”

Spending limits bumped up

Since February 2011, the spending limit on two credit cards used for travel and other expenses has been increased.

The spending limit on a credit card used to pay for Dallemand's travel expenses was \$5,000 for the billing cycle from Jan. 4 to Feb. 3, 2011. The next billing cycle, which covered Dallemand's first month on the job, showed a \$10,000 limit for the same card.

Another credit card used for school system expenses also had its spending limit increased to \$10,000 beginning with the monthly billing cycle for the card ending on Dec. 3, 2011. That card previously had a spending limit of \$2,000.

Had the credit limit not been increased, the December bill of \$2,094 also would

have been over the allowed limit.

The month before, the school system exceeded the \$2,000 spending limit by \$303.06, used to pay for books, dining and hotel expenses.

In January, the school system paid \$18,668.34 to pay off the two credit cards that Dallemand and his staff use for travel.

One had \$14,850.18 in charges — nearly \$5,000 over the limit. Another document requested receipts for charges on that card totalling \$12,344.60.

The second card, one that covers Dallemand's spending, was charged for \$3,818.16 that included expenses for Dallemand's travel, conference registration, meals, a hotel room for Deputy Superintendent Susanne Griffin-Ziebart and a guest from a January conference, and other expenses.

A handwritten note dated Jan. 25, 2012, on a request for payment of those expenses said: “Per (accounting director) Sharon Roberts, Ron (Collier) will not sign. Pay bill today anyway.” The note does not indicate who wrote it.

Another Jan. 25 e-mail from Roberts to Collier, copied to Hulett and finance administrative assistant Kathy Gabriel, said: “Attached is a file with the receipts needed for charges. As per your instructions, the total amount of the bill \$14,850.18 will be paid today.”

One of those credit cards now has a spending limit of \$24,000, Collier said. The decision was made in recent weeks, he said, as several departments were using the card to cover expenses, such as reserving hotel rooms, when more than one person in the system is traveling.

Comparisons, and board reaction

At least two superintendents of similarly sized districts have traveled considerably less than Dallemand has during his first year in Bibb County.

Houston County school Superintendent Robin Hines said he's been to events hosted twice a year by the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders, the Georgia School Superintendents Association and the Georgia School Boards Association along with school board members. None of Houston County's top administrators has traveled out of state in the last three years, though the system is now considering out-of-state travel on a case-by-case basis.

Since he became superintendent in 2010, Hines said his travel expenses have totaled just over \$1,700, mostly for hotel expenses. Hines drives a car provided by the school system, and he hasn't charged for meals.

Jim Whitson, Richmond County's acting school superintendent, has spent about \$1,390 in travel since June 1, said Lou Svehla, the system's public information director. About \$1,000 of that money covered travel to meetings in Madison, Atlanta and Athens, while \$300 in grant money paid for Whitson's expenses for a Race to the Top event in Washington, D.C.

School employees and board members in Richmond County have also cut down on travel and are taking part in conference calls and online meetings instead. When they do travel, they try to drive system-owned vehicles and carpool, Svehla said.

Bibb County school board members had differing views on Dallemand's travel and the accompanying costs.

Tom Hudson said he hasn't followed the extent of Dallemand's travels and considered doing so micromanaging the superintendent.

As far as travel spending running over budget, he said spending can come in over or under what's projected.

He also defended Dallemand's travels by saying the superintendent has put in long hours outside of the regular work week to develop his strategic plan and meet with community members. All of that is to help Bibb's students “compete from a global perspective.”

Hudson said the school board can't hold Dallemand accountable for his actions if they don't give him the freedom to carry out his duties as he sees fit. “We as elected officials hired Dallemand. We hired him to change the system.”

Board member Gary Bechtel said he was not made aware of most of the trips Dallemand has taken in the past year. He raised questions about the spending and the purpose of the trips.

Bechtel estimated that former Bibb school Superintendent Sharon Patterson made five to six out-of-town trips per year, which included statewide events as well as national conferences for groups such as the National School Boards Association.

While Patterson didn't necessarily ask board members for permission to travel, Bechtel said, she usually notified them when she was doing so.

“I’d have a question with 18 trips and whether he’s spending the required time in the district to do what he was hired to do, to provide leadership to staff and the students.”

To contact staff writer Andrea Castillo, call 744-4331. To contact staff writer Rodney Manley, call 744-4623.

Perry man convicted of killing aunt and uncle requesting new trial, 1B

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The Telegraph

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Thursday | May 3, 2012
MIDDLE GEORGIA'S
NEWSPAPER

UGA president to retire next year



Adams

By DORIE TURNER
Associated Press

ATLANTA — Longtime University of Georgia President Michael Adams is retiring in 2013 after more than 15 years at the helm of the state's flagship campus, offi-

cials familiar with the decision said Wednesday. Adams is expected to make a formal announcement Thursday at UGA's main campus in Athens. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because Adams' retirement was not yet public.

UGA spokesman Tom Jackson declined to comment Wednesday. Board of Regents chairman Ben Tarbutton also declined to comment. Under Adams' leadership, UGA

SEE UGA, 3A

Collectibles up for grabs at Old Book Sale



JASON VORHEES/jvorhees@macon.com

Vicki Grabowski sorts through paperback fiction books Wednesday in preparation for the Houston County Friends of the Library Old Book Sale at the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter in Perry.

By BECKY PURSER
bpurser@macon.com

WARNER ROBINS — What do a 1911 Uncle Remus book, vintage sheet music and a book about "Gone with the Wind" signed by supporting actress Butterfly McQueen have in common? All are collectibles up for grabs at this year's Old Book Sale sponsored by Houston County Friends of the Library, organizers say. The

three-day event is Thursday through Saturday at the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter. "People are so excited," said Pam Yates, co-captain of the book sale that is expected to attract more than 1,800 people, including out-of-state collectors. Some visitors to the book sale have come from Miami, South Carolina and New York, she said.

SEE BOOKS, 3A

Houston County Friends of the Library Old Book Sale

When: 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Thursday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday
Where: Georgia Building, Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter, Perry
Admission: \$5 on Thursday; free Friday and Saturday

BIBB COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

CFO: Miracle plan didn't create \$9M shortfall

Dallemand not yet looking to implement furloughs, official says

By MIKE STUCKA
mstucka@macon.com

ALSO ■ Discipline, hiring younger teachers among details of Miracle plan, 1B

The Bibb County school system has a matter of weeks to close a gaping budget deficit of at least \$9 million.

Ron Collier, the system's chief financial officer, said the projected shortfall for the next budget year is due entirely to outside forces

and not the Macon Miracle reforms or other internal changes. Collier said he hopes to present in the next two weeks

SEE SHORTFALL, 3A

Official 'disappointed' at board turnout for sunshine law training

By ANDREA CASTILLO
acastillo@macon.com

ONLINE

Bibb County school officials got a primer on Georgia's new sunshine laws Wednesday, but the man who led the training said he was disappointed that more board members weren't on hand to listen.

School board members Tom Hudson and Lynn Farmer attended the 90-minute session at the board headquarters. Wanda West arrived after the end of the meeting, and five members did not show. The session by Stefan Ritter, the state's

SEE TURNOUT, 3A

To see the presentation that Georgia Senior Assistant Attorney General Stefan Ritter gave to Bibb school officials, visit http://bibb.k12.ga.us/images/press/Summary_Open_Meetings_%20Records_Acts.pdf.

First lady's limo under repair in Macon

By AMY LEIGH WOMACK
awomack@macon.com

A limousine used by first lady Michelle Obama is being repaired at a Bibb County car dealership after it was damaged during President Barack Obama's trip to Fort Stewart last week. The 2003 Cadillac arrived at Hutchinson Auto Mall at 8:03 a.m. Wednesday and is being guarded by the Secret Service while it is repaired, said dealership co-owner Michael Hutchinson.

SEE LIMO, 3A



BEAU CABELL/bcabell@macon.com

An armed Secret Service guard, right, stands watch over the limo used by Michelle Obama last Friday in Savannah as it waits for parts in a bay at Hutchinson Cadillac in Macon on Wednesday.

THE RAIL

YOUR NEWS EXPRESS



Munch's 'Scream' sells for record \$120M

One of the art world's most recognizable images — Edvard Munch's "The Scream" — sold for a record \$119,922,500 at Sotheby's in New York on Wednesday. The buyer's name was not released. The 1895 artwork is one of four versions created by the Norwegian expressionist painter. The previous record for an artwork sold at auction was \$106.5 million for Picasso's "Nude, Green Leaves, and Bust," sold by Christie's in 2010.

— Associated Press



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86/64

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WEATHER, 6B

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SHORTFALL FROM 1A

more accurate budget numbers to school board members, who must adopt a budget by June 30. The latest deficit estimate is close to the \$9.48 million figure he presented to the school board in March.

It's not yet clear how the school system will deal with the budget shortfall, though the system is searching for revenue as well as cuts, and already has tapped its financial reserves to close a budget hole in the current year.

Collier said Superintendent Romain Dallemand does not intend to put furloughs into the mix for school employees.

Collier talked about the deficit with principals last week, he said.

"I mentioned furloughs and the fact there are other districts around us and comparable to us that are

looking at furloughs or are under furloughs," Collier said Wednesday. "We're not looking at furloughs until we can come up with the budget to see exactly where we're going to be."

School board member Lynn Farmer said she had heard rumors about the scale of the deficit since Collier's March presentation. She said she wants to know how Dallemand plans to implement parts of the Macon Miracle plan, such as elementary school foreign language, which the school system had never been able to afford.

"My concern all along is we can't afford to do the stuff he's talking about doing," Farmer said.

School board member Wanda West said she wants more information about the deficit and about possible solutions before commenting.

"Maybe that's in a report that's

coming," West said. "I think you have information that we don't have yet."

Nearly half of the school system's deficit is carried over from an existing shortfall.

The school system budgeted using about \$3.7 million from its financial reserves, known as a fund balance, in the fiscal year that ends in June. Collier said he expects the fund balance will fall to somewhere between \$20 million and \$22 million.

If nothing else changes in the budget, the school system's fiscal 2013 budget would also be about \$3.7 million short.

But other funding changes are harming the bottom line. Collier said he expects health insurance costs for some employees to increase about \$2 million in the next fiscal year that begins July 1. The state also changed its funding formula

for how money gets shifted among needy school systems, which will cost Bibb County another \$2 million or so, Collier said.

The school system also will have to pay more for a state teacher retirement system, which will add about \$1.3 million in costs. The system will also receive less money from the state, which expects enrollment to fall by 324 students.

Other changes include rising costs for fuel, workers compensation and unemployment, according to Collier's March presentation. Revenue from local property taxes also may decline, though estimates are not yet available.

Collier's March projections showed a \$9.83 million surplus in fiscal 2011; a \$3.72 million shortfall in the current fiscal year; a \$9.48 million shortfall in fiscal 2013; a \$5.31 million shortfall in fiscal 2014; and a surplus of \$48,700 in fiscal

2015. If those estimates become reality, the fund balance would fall to less than \$7.3 million, or about a third of where it is today.

Collier said Macon Miracle reforms won't add costs.

"We will operate within our budget. Some of the things in the strategic plan will be a case of us redirecting dollars that reprioritizes or refocuses the agenda that we're trying to execute, but it will be within the framework of our budget, not outside of that," he said.

Most of the action items in a management plan for the Macon Miracle contain a note of "Cost: Redirected from within current budgets."

The phrase "Cost: Redirected" appears 162 times in the document.

To contact writer Mike Stucka, call 744-4251.

TURNOUT FROM 1A

senior assistant attorney general, followed complaints by The Telegraph about the way the school system has dealt with open record requests in recent months.

"After hearing a series of complaints, we decided the easiest way to address" the situation was to hold Wednesday's training session, Ritter said. The session, he said, "was not to throw stones."

Before he began, Ritter said, "I'm disappointed that there aren't more members of the board here today."

Hudson said after the meeting that work obligations may have kept some members from attending.

Before the session, Hudson thanked Ritter for coming, saying the reason for Wednesday's session was "quite contrary to what may have been said in the media."

Asked later to elaborate, Hudson expressed concerns that the Macon media focus on the system's shortfalls and encourage division in the community.

"I think it's very informational," he said of the session. "It's better to prevent than deal with (problems) after the fact."

Along with about 30 members of the public other officials at the meeting included Superintendent Romain Dallemand, deputy superintendents, in-house attorney Randy Howard and Brad Carver,



Stefan Ritter, right, senior assistant attorney general for Georgia, gives his presentation on the state's open records laws with Bibb school Superintendent Romain Dallemand, left, and school board members Tom Hudson and Lynn Farmer present Wednesday morning. Ritter expressed disappointment in the lack of participation by other school board members.

GRANT BLANKENSHIP/gblankenship@macon.com

who is with the school system's law firm Hall Booth Smith & Slover.

Ritter said government transparency is "about the top priority" of state Attorney General Sam Olens.

"I can tell you (Olens) takes open government issues seriously," he said.

In April, Gov. Nathan Deal signed into law changes to the state's Open Records and Open Meetings provisions. Some of the changes

include higher sanctions for government agencies that do not follow the law, fining them \$1,000 for the first offense and \$2,500 for subsequent offenses within a year. It also lowers copying costs for records from 25 cents to 10 cents a page.

Ritter reviewed those changes as well as rules about holding meetings, keeping minutes, having executive sessions that are closed to the public and releasing public documents.

He also said that in disputes over the sunshine laws, the laws should be interpreted in favor of openness.

He also emphasized that the attorney general's office intervenes in cases questioning whether sunshine laws have been followed, but the office does not take sides with the parties in question. Residents can also settle disputes in court.

"We do not have a political side in what's going on

today," Ritter said.

Wednesday's session drew the attention of representatives from other local governmental agencies, such as Alfred Pitts, a member of the Jones County school board.

Pitts said he wanted to be informed about the state's sunshine laws and their applications in his jurisdiction.

"As a board you have to be careful," Pitts said. "It's important to know the rules so you don't violate the rules."

Susan Turner, a Bibb County resident, said she is concerned about travel spending by top school officials while not all students have textbooks to take home.

Turner said she felt reassured by Ritter's explanations and in knowing that residents have options if there is a conflict.

"It's nice to know there's a recourse," she said.

Dallemand said there was value in Ritter's visit to Bibb County.

"We thought this was a good opportunity for Mr. Ritter to come down himself and share with the public what the law says."

The superintendent insisted that the school system has been handling open record requests properly.

"We have been following the law, and we will continue to follow the law," he said.

Board member Farmer said she was "very pleased" with Ritter's presentation. She said she has heard complaints in the community about people not receiving information in a timely manner, adding that she hopes that the session can lead to a better working relationship between the school system and the public.

"I hope that we follow the law," she said. "I think with everything explained today, it's very clear we're a government entity. We should be open."

To contact writer Andrea Castillo, call 744-4331.

UGA FROM 1A

has climbed in college rankings and national profile. The university's enrollment has swelled to 35,000, including the most selective freshman class in its history.

He brought in more than \$1 billion in new construction since he took office in 1997 and hired nationally prominent researchers to build UGA's federal grant coffers.

Adams navigated rough waters as head of UGA.

After he forced beloved Athletic Director Vince Dooley into retirement in 2004, Adams was nearly ousted by a group of powerful boosters who were unhappy with the decision. He survived the controversy with the sup-

port of the university system's leadership and key state leaders.

Adams also was in charge in 2010 when Dooley's successor, Damon Evans resigned after a late night DUI arrest.

In 2008, he appointed a committee to handle sexual harassment complaints at the university after a rash of highly publicized allegations against faculty members.

Prior to serving at UGA, Adams held a top administrative job at Pepperdine University in California and was president at Centre College in Kentucky.

Before his higher education career, Adams was the chief of staff for former Tennessee Sen. Howard Baker and was an adviser to former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander.

LIMO FROM 1A

A Kevlar, run-flat tire was damaged. There also are problems with the car's suspension and brakes, Hutchinson said.

A service writer at the dealership received a call from the Secret Service last week requesting information about towing companies able to move a heavy-duty armored vehicle, he said.

The dealership sells vehicles made by Cadillac, Buick, GMC and Kia. Cadillac has manufactured presidential limos since 1930, Hutchinson said.

At first, the dealership didn't take the call seriously.

"We didn't know it was a presidential limo," Hutchinson said. "We thought it was a joke."

But after checking with Cadillac and Secret Service agents in Atlanta, it became clear that the call wasn't a hoax, he said.

It's unclear how long it will take to fix the vehicle.

Malcolm Wiley, assistant special agent in charge of the Secret Service's Atlanta field office, confirmed Wednesday that a Secret Service vehicle is being repaired in Macon.

He said he couldn't comment further.

Greg Epting, the dealership's service manager, said employees working on the car are talking with the Washington, D.C., technicians who service presidential limos and vehicles in the president's motorcade.

The Secret Service couldn't answer some of the Macon technicians' questions about the limo for security reasons, he said. The workers wanted to know how much it weighed to determine if they could put it on their "lift," but that information was top secret.

By mid-morning Tuesday, there was a lot of buzz at the dealership concerning the shiny black car bearing Washington, D.C., plate BJ 4096.

"Everybody's wanting to take photos," Epting said.

Epting said the car is kept in Atlanta for use by diplomats.

Hutchinson said the car has been used by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, former presidents Bill Clinton and George H.W. Bush and former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"It's an honor that they chose us," he said. "If we're good enough to work on one of the president's vehicles, we're good enough to work on anybody's."

To contact writer Amy Leigh Womack, call 744-4398.



JASON VORHEES/jvorhees@macon.com

Friends of the Library President Georgette Lipford sorts through fiction books Wednesday in preparation for the Houston County Friends of the Library Old Book Sale at the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter in Perry.

BOOKS FROM 1A

"Everybody finds something," Yates said.

Other notable items at the eighth annual sale include Dick and Jane readers, an Elvis collection, an Elizabeth Taylor section, books on genealogy and children's books including Grimm's Fairy Tales, Yates said.

More than 90,000 books are available for purchase with most at a "bargain price" of 50 cents to \$2, Yates said. However, special book sets can range from 50 cents up to \$100 each, she said.

For example, some of the genealogy books are priced at \$30, she said.

Volunteers set up in one day the makeshift library for the book sale inside the air-conditioned Georgia Building near the clock tower, Yates said. More than 3,000 books were carried

More than 90,000 books are available for purchase with most at a "bargain price" of 50 cents to \$2. However, special book sets can range from 50 cents up to \$100 each.

to the site by volunteers. Book are categorized, with maps available at the entrance.

Most of the books are donated, while others are retired from the public libraries, Yates said.

After expenses, funds raised from the sale go right back to the libraries, primarily for the purchase of new books, Yates said. Some of the funds help support children's programs at the libraries, she said.

About \$187,338 has been donated to the libraries since the founding of the Houston County Friends of Library in 2005, she said.

The sale opens at 10 a.m. Thursday for a \$5 admission. Expect lines at the opening, with folks wanting a first look at what's available, Yates said. Doors close at 8 p.m.

Friday and Saturday offer free admission starting at 9 a.m. Friday is generally the most relaxed shopping day with doors open until 8 p.m., Yates said. Saturday, everything is half-priced, so it's a "madhouse," Yates joked.

The event ends Saturday at 3 p.m. Volunteers take the summer months off, and then it's time to start cataloging and pricing books for next year's sale, Yates said.

To contact writer Becky Purser, call 256-9559.

BOE members: Independent review needed for finances



Farmer

Three board members question Dallemand's travel, attention to student safety

By ANDREA CASTILLO
acastillo@macon.com

"I really felt that this year the handling of discipline in the schools had been just about a complete failure."

Lynn Farmer, who said that discipline and teacher morale are among the worst she has seen in her decade as a school board member

Bibb County school board members Lynn Farmer, Sue Sipe and Gary Bechtel are calling for an independent financial review of the school system's spending, raising questions of whether money has been spent properly under the leadership of Superintendent Romain Dallemand.

Farmer, Sipe and Bechtel issued a written statement after the school board approved the Macon Miracle schools-improvement plan in a 5-3 vote Wednesday night. The three, who voted against the plan without more specifics of how it would be carried out or paid for, called for the financial review of system spending during Dallemand's first 13 months in office. The trio want an outside law enforcement agency or the current school board auditor to handle the review of spending, including money for employee salaries and consultants.

"There's a lot in the plan I support, but

ALSO

■ Highlights of latest Macon Miracle plan, 10A

SEE BOE, 10A



GRANT BLANKENSHIP/THE TELEGRAPH

The Rev. Frank Ray, right, speaks during an informational forum about Macon/Bibb County consolidation at Macon City Hall on Thursday night. On the panel with Ray were, from left, City Councilman Virgil Watkins, state Rep. Nikki Randall, attorney Calder Pinkston and June O'Neal, director of the Mentors Project.

Panelists discuss consolidation at forum

By JIM GAINES
jgaines@macon.com

The Rev. Frank Ray summed up his attitude, and the attitude of his four fellow panelists, at a public forum Thursday night on the pending bill in the state Legislature to allow consolidation of Macon and Bibb County governments.

"If we don't get it now, we need to go back to the

drawing board," he told the crowd of about 50 people at Macon City Hall.

State Rep. Nikki Randall, D-Macon; City Councilman Virgil Watkins; attorney Calder Pinkston; June O'Neal, executive director of The Mentors Project; and Ray fielded questions about House Bill 1171. The proposal would replace the gov-

SEE FORUM, 10A



WOODY MARSHALL/THE TELEGRAPH

Clint Eastwood poses for photos in front of Jackson Hewitt Tax Service on Northside Drive after finishing filming a scene in Northside Cheers. Eastwood was filming a scene for the movie "Trouble With the Curve."

Movie fans come out for glimpse of Eastwood

By PHILLIP RAMATI
pramati@macon.com



Celee Harris, left, and Victoria Larkins, center, both from Atlanta, pose with the actor's chair before he arrived at the Macon set. Harris described herself as "Clint Eastwood's No. 1 Fan" and spent the night in Macon, hoping to get an autograph.

It took Clint Eastwood to get the Braves back to Luther Williams Field.

But in this case, the Braves are a collection of extras filming baseball scenes for the movie "Trouble With The Curve," not the real-life minor league team that left Macon for Rome a decade ago.

Eastwood, who plays an aging scout in the movie that also stars Amy Adams, Justin Timberlake and John Goodman, filmed scenes Thursday at the ballpark and at Northside Cheers on Northside Drive.

Hundreds of extras, some of whom were wearing "Braves," "Intimidators" or umpire uniforms, milled around in front of the 83-year-old ballpark, eating or getting fitted for costumes in tents set up outside.

SEE EASTWOOD, 6A

THE RAIL

YOUR NEWS EXPRESS

Forsythia Festival is this weekend

OUT & ABOUT, INSIDE

Coke, Pepsi make changes to caramel coloring to avoid cancer warning

Coca-Cola Co. and PepsiCo Inc. are changing the way they make the caramel coloring used in their sodas as a result of a California law that mandates drinks containing a certain level of carcinogens bear a cancer warning label. A spokesman for the Food and Drug Administration noted that a consumer would have to drink more than 1,000 cans of soda a day to reach the doses administered that have shown links to cancer in rodents.

— Associated Press

High air fares likely for most of this decade

Air fares are likely to stay high throughout this decade, as passenger travel grows but airline capacity shrinks. In its annual economic analysis, the Federal Aviation Administration predicted that travelers won't get much relief until airlines start getting more competition, which is years off.

— Associated Press

Readers: Time for CBF haiku

With the Cherry Blossom Festival around the corner, we're looking for Cherry Blossom Festival-themed haiku to publish in The Telegraph. Remember: A haiku consists of 17 syllables, with lines of five, seven and five. E-mail your submissions to rmartinez@macon.com by noon Friday. Please put "CBF haiku" in the subject line.

EPA discusses contamination of Allied Industrial Park at meeting

Area might be added to Superfund site list

By MIKE STUCKA
mstucka@macon.com

Jacquelyn Murray has lived and worked around Allied Industrial Park for three decades. Thursday, she learned just how contaminated the area is.

"My kids and I played in those areas where the contamination is," Murray said.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, one soil sample, around the corner of a building from a

SEE ALLIED, 6A



Business 6B
Classified 1D
Comics 8C

Commentary 8A
Crossword 2D
Local & State 1B

Movies Out & About
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Sports 1C
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WEATHER, 8B

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EASTWOOD

FROM 1A

up outside.

About 30 yards away, Macon police kept fans outside of the production area with a barrier set up near the Round Building at Central City Park.

While those fans didn't get more than a glimpse of Eastwood from a distance, some waiting behind barriers near the Cheers pub on the north side of town had better luck.

John Garrard, 28, of Macon, met with Eastwood's manager while in the bar's parking lot, hoping to meet the screen icon.

"I begged him to let me get a picture," Garrard said, who stood

outside of the next-door Jackson Hewitt Tax Service office. "When I saw (Eastwood), I shouted, 'Mr. Eastwood, can I get a picture?' I was able to get a picture with him real quick. It's very exciting."

One of the things Eastwood's production crew noticed was a large sign above the tax service's door, which read, "Jackson Hewitt Welcomes Clint Eastwood — Go Ahead, File My Taxes." Garrard said Eastwood's manager appreciated the sign and pointed it out to the Hollywood legend.

About 70 people gathered as close to Cheers as security would allow about 2:15 p.m., when Eastwood drove up and entered the bar. As the crowd shouted to him, he stopped, smiled and pointed his

finger like a gun toward the crowd before going inside.

Celee Harris, a photographer and hairdresser from Atlanta, described herself as "Clint Eastwood's No. 1 Fan" and spent the night in Macon, hoping to get an autograph.

"It's exciting," she said, moments after Eastwood entered the bar. "I'm waiting to see if he comes back out. I'm not going anywhere until he leaves."

Carlos Morris, the kitchen manager at Cheers, got to be an extra in a couple of scenes at the bar.

"I don't know if I'm going to make the cut," he said, adding it's the first time he's been in a movie. "He's a genuine guy, man, a genuine guy."

Morris said the crew shot one

scene 10 times, but Eastwood never messed up his lines or got upset about doing the scene over and over.

One lane of Northside Drive was closed for 500 feet in front of the bar, causing the flow of traffic to slow down as motorists checked out what was going on.

Eastwood headed to Central City Park at about 4:30 p.m. Many of the extras had little to do but sit and wait, since the baseball scenes were scheduled to be filmed at night. One extra said he was told the production could be going as late as 1 a.m.

Macon Mayor Robert Reichert and his wife, Dele, city Finance Director Dale Walker, Bibb County Commission Chairman Sam Hart

and county Chief Administrative Officer Steve Layson all met with Eastwood outside the stadium and chatted for a few minutes.

"I told him I was glad he came to Macon and to let us know if he needed anything," Robert Reichert said. "I thanked him for all the wonderful memories (from his films and TV shows). I told him I remember him as Rowdy Yates on 'Rawhide.'"

Reichert asked Eastwood, a former mayor of Carmel, Calif., what he thought of Macon.

"He said that we've been very pleasant," Reichert said. "He's a very gracious, very quiet-spoken man."

To contact writer Phillip Ramati,

BOE

FROM 1A

again, my 'no' vote was more about voting yes for the transparency and accountability and fiscal transparency I don't think we've exhibited in this process," Farmer said Thursday.

Farmer said she, Bechtel and Sipe don't have a specific organization in mind for conducting the review, as long as it is one without a vested interest in its results.

"I would want to investigate the spending processes," she said. "I would want something independent of (Dallemand). Otherwise, I don't think the public is going to accept the findings."

The GBI would not do the sort of audit the three school board members are calling for, GBI spokesman John Bankhead said via e-mail.

For Farmer, a Feb. 26 Tele-

graph article examining Dallemand's out-of-town travel since he became superintendent in February 2011 raises serious questions about spending in the district.

"It's my job as a board member to mind the taxpayers' money," she said. "I just think as a district, I think we'd be better off to go ahead and get an independent review, (make) public the results and move on."

Meanwhile, the school system is undergoing its own forensic audit, Dallemand said Wednesday night.

According to school system documents, the forensic audit was intended to examine the system's accounting practices during fiscal years

2009, 2010 and 2011, as well as areas where fraud can or has taken place.

The Telegraph contacted the Bibb County school system for more information about the audit Thursday but could not reach anyone who could provide more information.

While the statement issued by Farmer, Sipe and Bechtel was given to the media, board President Tommy Barnes said he and other board members did not receive a copy of it.

"No board member communicated that to me," Barnes said Thursday. "They didn't give that to me last night."

At the Feb. 9 school board meeting, Dallemand and the

board discussed the possibility of presenting results of the forensic audit at its March 15 meeting, although that would not be set in stone until an agenda is released, Barnes said.

The board president also said the forensic audit will provide a comprehensive look at the system's finances and is not being performed by anyone in the district.

Farmer, Sipe and Bechtel's statement also raises questions of whether Dallemand has followed the stipulations outlined in his job contract, such as following state rules on travel spending.

The statement also says that Dallemand's contract stipulates that he, with the guid-

ance of the school board, will develop a strategic plan that prioritizes student achievement, school safety, budget management and community collaboration.

"I really felt that this year the handling of discipline in the schools had been just about a complete failure," said Farmer, who considers school safety a major priority.

Student discipline and teacher morale are among the worst Farmer has seen in her decade as a school board member.

While the plan now includes changes that do more to address discipline, Dallemand should have placed a strong focus on the issue and

enforced policies already in place, Farmer said.

"To me, if children are not safe in school and teachers are not safe teaching, we are not going to be successful. I don't care what plan we have in place," she said.

Farmer thinks an independent financial review would need school board approval, and she intends to bring up the matter at the next school board meeting.

If a majority of the board doesn't approve the review, "at least I feel that I have done due diligence as a board member to ask questions," Farmer said.

To contact writer Andrea Castillo, call 744-4331.

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THE
RAIL

YOUR NEWS EXPRESS

Shuttle
Enterprise
arrives in
New York



The space shuttle Enterprise — riding the back of a jumbo jet — glided across New York City and part of Long Island on Friday, putting on a magnificent show for thousands of awe-struck spectators.

Some gathered on rooftops. Some hovered around office windows. Others braved chilled winds, planting themselves along the waterfront in Battery Park and the retired spacecraft's future home — the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum on Manhattan's west side.

Nearly all came toting cameras, camcorders and smartphones, intent on documenting the historic event.

"It was amazing. It was awesome," said Sarah Crispi, 38, an attorney from Brooklyn who, along with several hundred other gawkers at Battery Park, caught the shuttle making a slow pass by the Statue of Liberty.

"USA! USA! USA!" one man shouted.

— Newsday

Perry city
manager
proposes
pay raises

LOCAL & STATE, 1B

Corrections

A story in Friday's Telegraph misidentified the rank of Greg McWhorter, commander of the Blue Angels. He is a captain.

A story in Friday's Telegraph about President Obama's visit to Fort Stewart misstated the location of the installation. It is just outside Hinesville.

Complaints prompt visit from AG's office

Bibb Schools under fire for accountability issues

By ANDREA CASTILLO
acastillo@macon.com

Bibb County school leaders will get a lesson on the state's Open Records and Open Meetings laws Wednesday from representatives of the state

Attorney General's Office.

The visit was prompted by complaints from The Telegraph about the way the school system has dealt with accountability issues in recent months.

A forum is scheduled for 10:30 a.m.

May 2 for the representatives to go over the sunshine laws. The forum will be held at the school system's central office, 484 Mulberry St.

The Telegraph contacted the Attorney General's Office April 19, raising concerns over issues such as missing documents in open record requests, the redaction of information in documents released, and fail-

ing to give a timetable for requested documents as required by law.

In one case, The Telegraph was told initially that no documents existed related to a request, but the system later produced hundreds of pages.

The forum will be hosted by Ste-

SEE AG, 4A

The fair is open for fun



JASON VORHEES/jvorhees@macon.com

Share your photos with
The Telegraph

Share your 2012 Georgia State Fair pictures by tagging them with #gastatefair on Instagram or Twitter, or e-mail them to myphotos@macon.com.

macon.com
ONLINE

Visit our website for a gallery of photos from over the years at the fair.

The Family Wheel stands at the entrance of Luther Williams Field as part of the Georgia State Fair at Central City Park. The fair runs through May 6.

Central City Park is once again will be filled with familiar sights, sounds and smells: the Georgia State Fair returned to Macon on Friday. Here's all you need to know before you go:

Admission

\$7 adults (ages 14-59), \$5 seniors (ages 60 and older) and youth (ages 5-13), free for kids 4 years old and younger. Unlimited ride wristbands are \$20.

Hours

- 4-11 p.m. May 4
- 10 a.m.-11 p.m. Saturday and May 5
- Noon-10 p.m. Sunday and May 6
- 1-10 p.m. Monday
- 4-10 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday

SEE FAIR, 4A

FVSU
faculty
backs
Rivers

Previous vote of no confidence rescinded

By CARYN GRANT
cgrant@macon.com

FORT VALLEY — Fort Valley State University faculty members supported university President Larry E. Rivers Friday, issuing a vote of confidence in his leadership of the university and rescinding a previous faculty senate vote of no confidence.



Rivers

The secret ballot vote came more than a week after the faculty senate, an elected body charged with representing the faculty, adopted a resolution of no confidence in Rivers and set in motion a series of events that included the faculty senate president eventually calling for action from the state University System Board of Regents.

SEE FVSU, 4A

Visit shows Obama, troops looking past deployments

By RUSS BYNUM
Associated Press

FORT STEWART — Their constant cycle of overseas deployments seemingly over, soldiers at Fort Stewart are starting families, shopping to buy their first homes and weighing first steps toward civilian careers.

It's not surprising that President Barack Obama's visit Friday to the largest Army post east of the Mississippi River focused on college benefits rather than combat missions. Like their commander in chief, soldiers of the Fort Stewart-based 3rd Infantry Division are starting to look beyond a life of war tours broken up only by periods of training for the next one.

The 3rd Infantry was the only

Army division called up to serve four tours in Iraq from 2003 until the last U.S. troops departed last year. And while more than 2,200 of the division's troops have now either deployed to Afghanistan or are heading there later this year, most of its 22,000 soldiers have no standing orders to return to war.

"People are not worrying about when the next deployment's coming," said Spc. Nicholas Tuper, 22, of Bombay, N.Y., who was among 10,000 soldiers and family members who waited in the simmering southeast Georgia heat to see Obama. "It used to be you

ALSO
■ Obama targets diploma mills that market to vets, 3A

said Spc. Nicholas Tuper, 22, of Bombay, N.Y., who was among 10,000 soldiers and family members who waited in the simmering southeast Georgia heat to see Obama. "It used to be you



RICHARD BURKHART/Associated Press

President Barack Obama and the first lady greet soldiers and families after delivering remarks and signing a bill Friday in Fort Stewart.

SEE OBAMA, 3A



Business 6A
Classified 1E
Comics 4D

Crossword 5D
Dear Abby 6D
Living 1D

Local & State 1B
Movies 6D
Obituaries 4B

Sports 1C
Stock Markets 7A
TV schedule 6D

89/59

Mostly sunny.

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12X9 ⁵	SUEDE SAXONY	\$189.99	\$59.99
12X10	TWEED SHAG	\$189.99	\$69.99
12X14	BROWN LEVEL LOOP	\$159.99	\$79.99
12X12	BURGUNDY PLUSH	\$179.99	\$89.99
13 ² X23 ²	NEON GREEN VINYL	\$389.99	\$99.99

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FAIR FROM 1A

Specials

- 1-4 p.m. Monday: \$20 for admission and rides
- 4-6 p.m. Tuesday: \$20 for admission and rides

Attractions

Petting Zoo: Featuring baby calves, goats, pigs, burros, buffaloes and miniature horses. Kids can pet these adorable babies one-on-one.

Welde Bears: The Famous Welde Family has featured their bears in the movies “Brother Bear” and “The Big Fish.” Promoting the preservation of bears, their Grizzly Falls Exhibit, complete with waterfalls and beautiful scenery, allows the bears to have playtime throughout the day where the public can see them in their natural habitat.

Puppetone Rockers: This nationally known act brings a wholesome message of positive re-enforcement. Their non-stop action show, outrageous performing characters, audience participation segments, performing pianos and original skits make the Puppetone Rockers a must-see show for kids.

Pig Races: Several times a day, pigs will

tear up the track as the crowd cheers. Next door, there will be pony rides, a petting zoo and a giant pig. Hambone Express will entertain young and old.

NoJoe’s Clown circus: Touring the U.S. and performing more than 500 shows, this group has amassed a wealth of awards including clowns of the year. Featuring three full rings of clowns, showgirls, acrobats and more.

Rhinestone Roper: For the past 15 years, The Rhinestone Roper Show has thrilled audiences with award-winning trick roping, knife throwing, bullwhip cracking, gun spinning, fast draw shooting and amazing stunts by veteran trick horses Luck Joe and Handsome Jack.

Music lineup

8 p.m. Saturday: The Marshall Tucker Band

5:30 p.m. Sunday: Land Down Under

6:10 p.m. Sunday: Garrett Lee

7 p.m. Sunday: JJ Weeks Band

8 p.m. Tuesday: DJ Rap Battle

8 p.m. Thursday: Battle of the Bands

6 p.m. May 4: Battle of the Bands winner

8 p.m. May 4: The Bellamy Brothers

6 p.m. May 5: Ivan Kelly

7:30 p.m. May 5: DJ Rap Battle winner

8 p.m. May 5: Ginuwine

3-8 p.m. May 6: Gospel Jam

FVSU FROM 1A

The faculty voted 77 to 15 with one abstention to rescind the senate’s no confidence vote, exceeding the necessary two-thirds vote needed. That vote was followed by another motion to issue a vote of confidence in Rivers’ ability to manage and lead the university, which was approved 57 to 3, with 16 abstentions in a vote taken by show of hands.

“I thank the FVSU faculty for their overwhelming vote of confidence in my leadership at the University,” Rivers said in a statement to The Telegraph. “At this time, I sincerely would like for things to settle down, for the FVSU family to come together to educate our students and to continue to move our university forward.”

Friday’s meeting was convened to discuss repealing the senate’s no confidence vote after more than 10 percent of the faculty petitioned to do so.

“The university is not split. These were actions taken by a minority that is not representative of the views of the faculty,” Department of Mathematics and Computer Sciences professor Josephine Davis said of the senate’s vote.

The more than 90 faculty members in attendance Friday represented the vast majority of the university’s faculty.

Faculty senate President Seyoum Gelaye and Secretary Kananur Chandras, who sent letters to state officials asking for the senate’s vote of no confidence to be upheld, did not attend the Friday meeting.

Both responded to e-mails from Davis stating they would await word back on those letters before appearing at such a meeting.

Letters sent by Gelaye and Chandras to Hank Huckaby, chancellor of the University System of Georgia, and other state officials stated that university officials had tried to intimidate and harass faculty senate members who submitted no confidence votes.

John Millsaps, spokesman for the University System, said officials are aware of the issue at Fort Valley State and are working to determine what exactly has occurred and if any action is required.

Faculty members voiced acceptance of Executive Vice President and Chief Legal

Officer Canter Brown’s decision to nullify the senate’s vote of no confidence. Brown cited procedural missteps as the reason for his decision.

“The faculty was outraged (by the faculty senate’s actions),” said Juone Brown, an associate professor in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Brown, who was president of the faculty senate from 2006 to 2008 and was at the April 19 meeting, said while different opinions are welcomed in an academic setting, her concern stemmed from the way the senate faculty went about the decision — without first consulting the faculty as a whole.

Fred van Hartesveldt, a professor in the History, Geography, Political Science and Criminal Justice Department, carried a list highlighting Rivers’ achievements since taking the helm at Fort Valley State in 2006, countering the issues expressed in the senate’s resolution of no confidence.

The list included new construction and renovations, favorable rankings for the school among public colleges in the South by U.S. News and World Report, reaffirmation of FVSU’s accreditation in 2011 and the establishment of a number of new graduate degree programs.

Future of the senate

During the more than 90-minute meeting, faculty members clarified that the faculty senate had not been abolished, but its membership was disbanded.

University departments are now in the process of electing new faculty senate representatives, which can include sending back the same members.

That process needs to be complete by the end of the academic year, and the faculty senate will proceed as normal, Davis said.

Gelaye questioned in his letter to Huckaby about possibly amending the faculty senate bylaws to prevent future instances such as this.

Faculty also voted unanimously by voice vote Friday to report the decisions of the meeting to university administration and Huckaby.

To contact writer Caryn Grant, call 256-9751.

AG FROM 1A

fan Ritter, the office’s senior assistant attorney general. The session is open to the public.

Officials in the Attorney General’s Office thought there was a need to be proactive and hold a training session with Bibb school officials, said Lauren Kane, a spokeswoman for the office.

“All governments need to follow the law and operate in an open manner,” she said.

Randy Howard, the school system’s in-house attorney, said he looks forward to Wednesday’s session.

“I think it’s going to be good,” Howard said. “We need to improve the working and the professional relationship between the district, the media, as well as the residents of Bibb County. It gives us some idea of how to proceed.”

In the future, Howard said the system plans to post information on its website about how residents should file open records requests with Bibb schools, directing them to Howard.

That way, the system has a process in place to make sure the requests are handled in a timely manner, he said.

That initiative is not in response to The Telegraph’s complaint or the upcoming session, he said. Rather, the decision came after a recent discussion Gainesville-based attorney Phil Hartley had with school system representatives around the state about recent changes to Georgia’s sunshine laws, Howard said. Those changes, signed into law earlier this month, include higher fines for agencies that do not follow the law, among other provisions.

Howard said he welcomes Ritter’s visit to clarify the law and set things in motion for a positive working relationship with those who seek information from the system in the future.

“He can help all of us to give ... guidelines on how to maintain that transparency,” Howard said. “The response to those questions will be invaluable.”

Wednesday’s session with Bibb County school leaders will take place a year after

Ritter and Attorney General Sam Olens held a session with Savannah’s City Council members about the state’s sunshine laws.

That session was prompted by complaints over the way interviews of city manager candidates were handled, according to the Savannah Morning News.

Currently, the Attorney General’s Office is investigating a complaint filed by Nydia Tisdale, who was kicked out of an April 17 meeting of Cumming City Council after trying to record it, according to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

The Telegraph isn’t the only outlet to raise concerns over the way the Bibb County school system has handled open records requests. Local blogger Bill Knowles wrote a letter to the Attorney General’s Office about seven such requests he submitted in March, five of which had gone unanswered when Knowles sent off his letter. Howard later wrote to Ritter that all of Knowles’ requests had been addressed.

To contact writer Andrea Castillo, call 744-4331.

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Bibb BOE hires police captain fired from last job

Rodgers didn't tell BOE he was under investigation

By ANDREA CASTILLO
acastillo@macon.com

The Bibb County school system hired a former small-town police chief who was fired from his last job and has a pending complaint against him with the state agency that oversees police ethics and certification. That agency, the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council, has concluded its investigation of Ronald Rodgers and will decide what action to take in his case in December, said Ryan Powell, the council's director of operations. Rodgers, who was the city of Marshallville's police chief from April 2011 until this past January, began working on the Bibb Coun-

SEE BOE, 3A

Ex-sheriff used wrench on inmate's broken jaw, plea reveals

By JOE KOVAC JR.
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A former midstate sheriff, who pleaded guilty to beating an inmate at the Wilcox County jail, tried to pop the prisoner's broken jaw back in place with a wrench after the assault. Ex-Sheriff Stacy Bloodsworth also admitted that he conspired to cover up the attack on then-19-year-old Kyle Michael Hyatt and two other inmates. About a week after the July 2009 episode, Hyatt's busted jaw was treated and wired shut at a hospital. Hyatt was one of three inmates at the jail suspected of having a mobile phone in his

SEE WRENCH, 6A

Macon woman has meningitis

First case in state linked to tainted drugs, health officials say

By MIKE STUCKA
mstucka@macon.com

Health officials have confirmed a Macon woman is the state's first case of fungal meningitis related to contaminated epidu-

ral steroidal injections. State officials said the patient, a 66-year-old, is clinically stable and not hospitalized after she received a single injection from a suspected batch of contaminated drugs at the Forsyth

Street Ambulatory Surgery Center in Macon. On Tuesday afternoon, Dr. Frank Kelly of the surgery center said he hadn't seen any information that the case had been confirmed as meningitis. But

the patient seems to be doing well and hadn't been getting any treatment for meningitis without a diagnosis, he said. "She has very few symptoms, if any, of meningitis. She has not had fever. She has not had back

SEE MENINGITIS, 3A

Arrest made in killing

Yardman charged with slaying of 87-year-old widow



GRANT BLANKENSHIP/gblankenship@macon.com

Aurie Bonner III, center, is walked from the Macon Police Department's Detective Bureau to a car waiting to take him to the Bibb County Jail on Tuesday night. Bonner was arrested and charged with killing Christine Patton Cook in her home on General Lee Road.

By PHILLIP RAMATI and OBY BROWN
Telegraph Staff

A man who had done yardwork for an 87-year-old widow was charged with her slaying late Tuesday. Aurie Bonner III, 31, was charged with murder in the suffocation death of Christine Patton Cook.

Bonner was led out of the Macon Police Department's Detective Bureau about 9 p.m., then taken to the Bibb County jail. Police would release no details of the case, citing the pending prosecution. Police Chief Mike Burns said authorities would be meeting with District

Attorney Greg Winters on Wednesday to discuss whether to file more charges against Bonner. Bonner has been arrested 11 times since 1998, police said. He served his latest prison sentence for burglary at Ware State Prison, and he was re-

SEE ARREST, 6A



JASON VORHEES/jvorhees@macon.com

Jermontae Artez Moss, left, listens to his attorney Rodney Davis during his murder trial Tuesday in Houston County. Moss is charged with murder in the slaying of Jose Marin outside of Marin Mexican Food Store on Sept. 22, 2011.

HOUSTON COUNTY: MARIN MURDER TRIAL

Key witnesses testify in murder trial

Prosecution aims to link man ID'd in shooting to killing of WR store owner

By CHRISTINA M. WRIGHT
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PERRY — Houston County District Attorney George Hartwig told jurors Tuesday the case against a Warner Robins teenager charged with killing a Mexican food store owner is clear and simple.

But before Hartwig began presenting evidence, defense attorney Rodney Davis told jurors the case isn't as clear as the prosecution says — especially given that Hartwig must present a second crime to identify Jermontae Moss as the shooter. Moss, 18, faces a string of charges — including murder, armed robbery and possession of a firearm during a crime — related to the September 2011 shooting of 43-year-old Jose Marin. After opening statements from both sides, two key state witnesses testified. The first, Javier Moreno, was present when

Marin was killed at Marin Mexican Food Store. The second, Neftali Corado, was allegedly shot by the same man the night before. Moreno said he was in a supply truck when a young black man — covering his face with a red bandana — pointed a gun at his boss, Marin, and demanded money. The gunman wore black jogging pants, a white shirt and something on his head, Moreno testified. Police quickly located Moss less than half a mile from the

SEE TRIAL, 6A



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